

FELSTED PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the 1122nd meeting held on 1 May 2024 at 6:30 pm in the URC Hall

Present: Councillors Graham Harvey (Chairman), Alec Fox, Richard Freeman, Hywel Jones (entered during the discussion of Item 24/105.4), Frances Marshall, John Moore, Andrew Parker (entered during the discussion of Item 24/99), Clive Perrins, Roy Ramm and Richard Silcock (parish/district) along with 4 members of the public. Also present: District Councillor John Evans. In attendance: Heather Read (Clerk), Clare Schorah (Assistant Clerk) and Daniel Plunkett (Responsible Finance Officer)

24/91 **Election of Chairman and signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office**

It was proposed by Cllr Roy Ramm, seconded by Cllr Alec Fox and unanimously agreed to appoint Cllr Graham Harvey as Chair of the Council.

24/92 **Election of Vice Chair**

It was proposed by Cllr Richard Silcock, seconded by Cllr Richard Freeman and unanimously agreed to appoint Cllr Frances Marshall as Vice Chair of the Council.

24/93 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from County Cllr Martin Foley and Youth Representative Molly Bennett

24/94 **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Richard Silcock declared a pecuniary interest in Item 24/114 Neighbourhood Plan Review and stated that he would not take part in the discussion of that item.

24/95 **Public Forum**

No issues were raised.

24/96 **Minutes of Meeting 1121 held on 3 April 2024**

These Minutes were approved and were signed by the Chairman.

24/97 **Minutes of the Planning Committee meeting held on 23 April 2024**

These Minutes were noted and would be formally approved at the next meeting of the Planning Committee.

24/98 **Matters Arising from the 3 April Council Meeting**

98.1 Triennial Tree Survey (Item 24/74.2) – The PC were advised that the triennial tree survey took place on Tuesday 16th April. The report is awaited.

98.2 Public Toilets (Item 24/88) – The PC noted that the toilets are now being manually locked / unlocked on a daily basis so that unauthorised access can no longer be gained after hours.

24/99 **Councillor Vacancy**

The PC noted that the Clerk had informed UDC of the resignation of Cllr Penny Learmonth. Notices had been posted advertising the vacancy and giving residents the opportunity to request an election to fill the vacant seat. As an election has not been requested UDC has given the PC permission to fill the vacancy by co-option. The vacancy will be advertised in the Felsted Focus and on the PC website and noticeboards.

24/100 **Appointment of:**

100.1 Responsible Financial Officer – It was proposed by Cllr Graham Harvey, seconded by Cllr Roy Ramm and unanimously agreed that Daniel Plunkett should continue in this role.

100.2 Council Representatives on External Bodies

The following appointments were proposed by Cllr Graham Harvey, seconded by Cllr Frances Marshall and unanimously agreed:

Crix Green Trust – Cllrs Graham Harvey, Frances Marshall and Richard Silcock

Felsted United Charities – Cllrs Alec Fox, Graham Harvey and Richard Silcock to continue their terms of office. Proposed by Cllr Graham Harvey, seconded by Cllr Richard Freeman,

Cllr Frances Marshall was unanimously reappointed for a further term of office.

100.3 Council Committee Members

Planning Committee – Cllrs Richard Freeman, Graham Harvey, Hywel Jones, Andrew Parker, Clive Perrins and Roy Ramm

Highways Committee – Cllrs Richard Freeman, Alec Fox and Frances Marshall

Finance Committee – Cllrs Graham Harvey, Frances Marshall, John Moore, Roy Ramm and Richard Silcock

Churchyard Working Group – Cllr John Moore

Biodiversity Working Group – Cllrs Richard Freeman, Graham Harvey, Hywel Jones, John Moore, Andrew Parker and Richard Silcock

Emergency Planning Working Group – Cllrs Graham Harvey and Roy Ramm

Health and Safety Working Group – Cllrs Graham Harvey, John Moore and Clive Perrins

H R Working Group – Cllrs Richard Freeman, Graham Harvey and Frances Marshall

Nature Area Steering Group – Cllrs Graham Harvey, Hywel Jones, Andrew Parker and Richard Silcock

Nature Area Working Group – Cllrs Richard Freeman, Graham Harvey, Hywel Jones, John Moore, Andrew Parker and Richard Silcock

Christmas Tree Working Group – Cllrs Alec Fox, Richard Freeman, Graham Harvey, Frances Marshall, John Moore, Andrew Parker, Clive Perrins and Roy Ramm

100.4 Transport Representative – The PC were advised that Bryan Grimshaw had stepped down as Felsted's Transport Representative and they expressed their thanks to him for his work during his time in the role. The PC unanimously agreed to appoint Robert Richardson as Felsted's new Transport Representative.

100.5 Felsted History Recorder – The PC noted that Bryan Grimshaw remains in this role.

24/101 **Terms of Reference for Committees** – Proposed by Cllr Frances Marshall, seconded by Cllr Richard Freeman the Terms of Reference for the Finance, Highways and Planning Committees were unanimously agreed.

24/102 **Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations** – Proposed by Cllr John Moore, seconded by Cllr Richard Silcock it was unanimously agreed to approve the current Code of Conduct, Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

24/103 **County Councillor Report**

Members noted a report from County Cllr Martin Foley which contained updates on Highways matters.

24/104 **District Councillors Report**

Members noted the [report](#) from the District Councillors which contained information on: the report by UDC's Scrutiny Committee as to the causes of the temporary "grounding" of the UDC refuse fleet at the beginning of the year and the additional cost throughout that period; UDC's Investment Properties and Borrowing Matters; Local Flooding Issues; an update on the Draft Local Plan which if approved by council will result in the publication of a Regulation 19 Plan to be consulted on from the end of July until September and Stansted Airport matters including the Night Flights Consultation and pending flight path changes.

24/105 **Correspondence**

Members noted the Correspondence received (see page 6) including the following:

105.1 Braintree Road Unnotified Road Closure – The PC noted that the closure on 12-16 April 24 had been for emergency utility works and therefore it had not been possible for ECC to issue prior notification.

105.2 Vandalism of Newly Planted Trees – The PC were advised that the newly planted Horse Chestnut trees on Bannister Green had been systematically vandalised. The Clerk confirmed that this had been reported to the police.

105.3 Bannister Green Playground – The PC were advised that some remedial works were needed to make Bannister Green playground more suitable for preschool aged children. The Village Attendant will carry out repairs.

105.4 Willows Green Parking – The PC discussed the ongoing issue of parking in Mole Hill

Green Road. The Assist Clerk will make an application to ECC Highways to reinstate the verge.

105.5 Watch House Green – The PC were advised that in readiness for sowing a wildflower meadow areas of grass had been left uncut to mark out the designated areas. Due to the wet spring the wildflower meadows cannot be sown until the Autumn. The areas will therefore once again be mown until the Autumn sowing.

105.6 Flag Pole – The PC noted that the flag pole although owned by the PC is on school land. The agreement with the school is that the flag will be flown in November for Remembrance Sunday and for significant royal events. The PC noted that exceptionally a special commemorative flag will be flown in June for the D Day 80th Commemoration.

105.7 Bus and Public Transport Connections – The PC agreed that as a semi-rural area Felsted is fortunate to have two bus services as well as the on demand service Digi Go.

24/106 Finance

106.1 Payments – Members considered the lists of payments on pages 7/8. Proposed by Cllr Roy Ramm, seconded by Cllr Alec Fox the payment list was unanimously approved. It was noted that £300 had been transferred to the Felsted Community Trust to enable solicitor fees to be paid. It is anticipated that this amount will be repaid to the PC by the trust once they are in receipt of rentals from the new Doctors Surgery.

106.2 Receipts – Members noted the receipts of £65975.48 consisting of the first half of the Precept £64382.50, Felsted Focus Advertising £1520, Felsted Focus Donations £7 and reimbursement by ECC of Parish Path Partnership Expenses £65.98

106.3 Extension of Insurance from 1st to 14th June – The PC noted that in previous years their insurance was due for renewal on 1st June. This created difficulties as historically quotes would not be ready in time for the May PC meeting although PC approval was needed prior to the June PC meeting. The RFO advised that the insurance company has therefore extended the current period of cover from 01/06/24 to 13/06/24. This will mean that in future insurance renewals can be considered during the PC's June meetings. Due to the extended period of cover this year an additional premium of £113.87 is due and this is included in the list of payments on pages 7/8 (see minute 24/106.1).

106.4 Direct Debits and Electronic Payments – Proposed by Cllr Roy Ramm, seconded by Cllr Frances Marshall it was unanimously agreed to allow regular payments to continue to be made by Direct Debit / Electronically.

106.5 Internal Auditor for 2024-25 Financial Year – The PC were advised that at their meeting on 28 February 24 the Finance Committee recommended the reappointment of the current Internal Auditor (Val Evans) for the coming financial year 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025 (minute F23/63). It was proposed by Cllr Roy Ramm, seconded by Cllr John Moore and unanimously agreed that Val Evans should continue as the PC's internal auditor for the financial year 2024/25.

106.7 Nature Area Banking Restrictions – The PC were advised that the original S106 agreement stated that the money supplied by the developers for maintenance of the Nature Area must be held in a designated deposit account separate to PC funds. Currently this is the case with monies split between Barclays and Metro banks. As general Parish Funds are also held with Barclays the Finance Committee will consider moving the NA funds to a different bank so that all funds are within the £85,000 Financial Services Compensation Scheme limit.

24/107 Allotments

107.1 Community Payback Team – The PC were advised that the Community Payback Team are due to be working on the allotments from Monday 10th June – Thursday 13th June 24.

107.2 Creation of New Plots – The PC were advised that there was a waiting list for allotment plots. They agreed to a request from the Chair of the Allotment Society that the grassed area in the middle of the allotment gardens (referred to as the BBQ area) and a former plot on the edge of the allotment gardens be used to create several new small plots. Cllr Graham Harvey will plough the areas concerned to create the plots.

107.3 Condition of Plot – The PC were advised that the Clerk had written to a plot holder regarding the unsatisfactory condition of their plot. Wood with nails protruding had been left lying about along with other assorted detritus. It was agreed that this was a health and safety hazard which if not rectified by the deadline given would result in the termination of the plot holders tenancy agreement.

- 24/108 **D Day Commemoration - Lighting of the Beacon** – The PC noted that arrangements are in place for the lighting of the Beacon to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of D-Day on 6 June 2024.
- 24/109 **Royal British Legion (RBL)**
109.1 Outside Space – The PC agreed to a request by the RBL to once again use two car parking spaces as an outside space from the 1st of May until the 30th September 2024. The PC reserved the right to terminate the arrangement for any reason by the giving of 7 days notice.
109.2 Outdoor Food Vendors – The PC were advised that the RBL do not currently have plans to have food vendors outside of the club in the near future but that they will advise the PC if this changes..
- 24/110 **Biodiversity Working Group Update** – The PC were advised that the next meeting of the Biodiversity Working Group is scheduled for Thursday 20th June.
- 24/111 **Nature Area Update**
111.1 Current Works – The PC were advised that JCM Services were due to cut back hemlock growing on the Nature Area before the end of the month.
111.2 Future Works – The PC agreed that quotes for grass cutting and maintenance of the willow trees around the pond area would be reviewed at the June PC meeting.
111.3 Site Visit – The PC noted that the newly formed Steering Group would arrange to carry out a site visit to the Nature Area.
- 24/112 **Bury Farm Station Road Development** – The PC noted that following the Freedom of Information request made to the ICB asking how they were arriving at a rental figure 90% less than expected the ICB had refused to answer. The PC have lodged an appeal.
- 24/113 **Felsted Community Trust** – The PC were advised that the bank account with Nat West has now been established.
- 24/114 **Neighbourhood Plan Review / Update** – The PC were advised that the work of the FNPSG reviewing the Felsted Neighbourhood Plan was expected to continue for a further 6 - 7 months.
- 24/115 **Archives Open Day** – The PC were advised that there will be an archive open day at the Crix Green Mission Hall on Saturday 12th October 24. It is hoped that residents will take the opportunity to see both the hall and the interesting archives.
- 24/116 **Chairman's Matters**
116.1 War Memorial – The PC were advised that Cllr Graham Harvey will arrange for this to be cleaned.
116.2 Grass Cutting Tender Document – The PC noted that a tender document has been drafted by Cllr Graham Harvey and is in the process of being reviewed and condensed. Once finalised it will be sent out in the Autumn to contractors wishing to tender for the 2025 Grass Cutting contracts.
116.3 Procurement Training – The PC were advised that Cllrs Graham Harvey and Clive Perrins recently attended a training course on procurement. Both found it to be useful and informative.
- 24/117 **Clerk's Matters**
117.1 Spraying of Hard Surfaces – The PC were advised that JCM Services have dropped the cost of spraying the hard surfaces (play areas / churchyard) and have included it within the grass cutting contract at no extra charge. This will save the parish £300 per annum.
117.2 Playbark – The PC were advised that this was due to be delivered and spread in the main play area on 13th May.
Clerk's Note: Due to extremely soft ground conditions this has now been rescheduled for the 14th June.
117.3 Bin by Church Archway – The PC noted that during the public forum of the Annual Parish Assembly the bin in the church archway was discussed. The area surrounding the bin can become messy when the bin is full as it is targeted by birds who pull the rubbish out. The Clerk contacted UDC to request that the bin is emptied with greater frequency. UDC however confirmed that the bin is already emptied by their operatives on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays and that the only time they find the bin completely full is after the weekends. The Village Attendant will

when possible carry out an additional emptying on Saturdays.

117.4 Crix Green Mission – The PC noted that the June Parish Council meeting will be held at the Crix Green Mission Hall. This will be publicised on PC notice boards, the website and by leafleting residents local to the hall.

117.5 The Chequers – The PC were advised that following a discussion with the landlord of The Chequers (minute 24/50.3) he has constructed a bin store which has substantially improved the frontage of the property. The Clerk will contact the landlord of The Chequers to convey the PC’s thanks.

24/118 **Planning Applications and Decisions**

118.1 Applications to be Considered at the next Planning Meeting

UTT/24/1078/OP - Watchouse Farm Bannister Green

Outline application with all matters reserved except access for the erection of 4 no. dwellings

118.2 Decisions Received Since Previous Council Meeting

UTT/24/0239/FUL - Tarcquita Braintree Road

Demolition of existing bungalow, outbuildings and hardstanding areas, and erection of 2 no. bungalows with additional landscaping

Permission Granted - 25th April 2024

118.3 Appeal Decisions Received Since Previous Council Meeting

UTT/23/1387/HHF - Springmead Stebbing Road

Proposed Annexe as ancillary use to main dwelling.

Appeal Dismissed - 10th April 2024 *'The proposed development would cause harm to the character and appearance of the countryside, and to the setting of Brook Farm House... The development would make a modest contribution to the local housing stock, and to making good any shortfall in the 5-year supply. But this benefit would not outweigh the conflict with the development plan; indeed the benefit would itself be outweighed, both significantly and demonstrably, by the harm.. to the countryside and to the nearby heritage asset.'*

UTT/23/1345/OP - Land Adjacent Greenfields Bartholomew Green

Outline application with all matters reserved except access for the erection of 1 no. detached dwelling.

Appeal Dismissed - 12th April 2024 *'the proposal conflicts with the development plan, read as a whole. No other material considerations, including the Framework, have been shown to indicate that a decision should be taken otherwise than in accordance with it. Therefore, the appeal should be dismissed.'*

24/119 **Urgent Items**

Braintree Road Planned Closure - The PC noted that ECC Highways planned to close Braintree Road between the 8th and 13th May. Conflicting notifications had been received from ECC resulting in a lack of clarity and confusion. Residents had either not been notified about the planned road closure or had been made aware but at very short notice. The Clerk will write a letter of complaint to ECC Highways requesting that the planned closures do not go ahead next week and that any communication about future planned road closures is less confusing, more comprehensive and issued in a timelier manner. Should the road need to be closed to enable works to be carried out the PC will request that this takes place during night time hours in order to minimise disruption.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 8.21 pm

Next Meetings:

Next Finance Committee Meeting: Wednesday 8 May 24 in the URC Hall at 5.00 pm

Next Planning Committee Meeting: Tuesday 21 May 24 online at 6pm

Next Council Meeting: Wednesday 5 June 24 in the Crix Green Mission Hall at 6.30pm

..... 5 June 2024
Chairman

Correspondence List – May 2024

1. UDC: Application for a Premises Licence - Dunmow Foodie Festival 13 July 2024 at Ashfields Polo Club Gt Canfield last date for representations is 20 May 2024
2. ECC: a) Temp.Night time closure Braintree Road, due to commence on 2nd October 2024 for 7 nights. The closure is required for road surfacing works. (circ to PC 16/4) b) Carbon Cutting App research sessions until 3 May (circ to PC 24/4) c) Temp. closure of Braintree Road, due to commence on 9th May 2024 for 5 days. The closure is required for road surface dressing works. (circ to PC 29/4) d) Temp. closure of Braintree Road, due to commence on 8th May 2024 for 3 days. The closure is required for ECC road surfacing works. (circ to PC 1/5)
3. EALC: a) Weekly News e-Bulletins b) Annual General Meeting Thursday 26th September 2024 at Colchester Stadium c) Training sessions covering communications, community engagement and GDPR/FOI compliance (circ to PC 30/4)
4. Essex Local Nature Partnership – March Update
5. Locality: Webinar re new Neighbourhood Planning Design Coding Guidance. Online Wednesday 1 May 2024 (details fwd to Cllrs RR / RF 27/4)
6. Resident Letters: a) Braintree Road Unnotified Road Closure - 12-16 April 24 (<i>Clerk's note: works were for emergency utility works</i>) b) Bannister Green - Vandalism of Newly Planted Trees c) Bannister Green - Playground Unfit for Under School Age Children d) Willows Green - Parking issues in Molehill Green Road e) Watch House Green – Complaint re grass left unmown f) Flag Pole Usage g) Bus and Public Transport Connections via Felsted h) Allotments – Complaint about Plot (see Agenda Item 16c)
7. AEF Government's Night Noise Restrictions Consultation (fwd to Cllr JM 3/4)
8. RCCE: a) Essex Village of the Year & Rural Community Awards 2024 (circ to PC 4/5) b) Essex Warbler – May 24 Edition
9. CPRE: April Campaigns Update (circ to PC 13/4)

Unpaid List – May 2024

	Date	Num	Memo	Open Balance
A & J Lighting Solutions				
	15/04/2024	38227	Replacement Light fittings - o/s 18 Chaffix	180.00
	19/04/2024	38234	Replacement Sox lamp and photocell - Bakers Lane / Chelmsford Road & Tudor Cottage Braintree Road	321.60
Total A & J Lighting Solutions				501.60
Astragraphic Design Ltd				
	20/04/2024	611	Monthly charge for Adobe Software Creative Cloud Suite	51.98
Total Astragraphic Design Ltd				51.98
British Gas - BGL465975				
	28/04/2024	7517050	MUGA Electricity for period 28/03/24 to 28/04/24 - Account BGL465975, MPAN 1030072525215, Meter ...	31.04
Total British Gas - BGL465975				31.04
Dunmoweb				
	06/04/2024	dweb1104-i0018	FPC website hosting/domain 2024-25	393.00
	01/04/2024	dweb1104-i0019	Website redesign and updates	1,100.00
Total Dunmoweb				1,493.00
EDF - Pavillion - A-40851E59				
	01/05/2024	002	Pavillion Electricity - period 01/04/24 to 30/04/24 - Meter # 22S1091521 - MPAN 1012485770570	131.53
Total EDF - Pavillion - A-40851E59				131.53
Felsted Community Trust				
	19/04/2024	Donation	Donation to Felsted Community Trust towards setup expenses	300.00
Total Felsted Community Trust				300.00
JCM Services				
	01/05/2024	1863	Nature Area - Grounds Maintenance 1/4	420.00
	01/05/2024	1862	Parish and Church yard grounds maintenance 1/4	3,600.00
Total JCM Services				4,020.00
Julie Smith				
	30/04/2024	Apr24	Cleaning and Maintenance of Playing Field Toilets - Apr24	375.00
Total Julie Smith				375.00
Kelshall Plastics				
	24/04/2024	1292	Collection of 1x 1000kg bags tree guards @£45 each	54.00
Total Kelshall Plastics				54.00

Lee Heron				
	30/04/2024	Apr24	Unlocking car park 1 - Apr24	60.00
	30/04/2024	Apr24 - Toilets	Locking / unlocking playing field toilets	60.00
Total Lee Heron				120.00
M&B Printers				
	18/04/2024	17323	Signage - Wildflower area signs and do not obstruct gate sign	324.00
Total M&B Printers				324.00
Officials - Salary				
	30/04/2024	Apr24 - Salary		3,309.50
Total Officials - Salary				3,309.50
Officials - Expenses				
	30/04/2024	Apr24 - Exp	Clerk's expenses - Apr 2024- Zoom subscription, Google Suite & computer support package, monthl... Asst Clerk Expenses - Apr24 - mobile phone monthly contract, mileage RFO Expenses - Apr 2024 - Land Registry Search	324.54
Total Officials - Expenses				324.54
Officials - NEST Pensions				
	30/04/2024	Apr24 - CS	Pension Contribution - C Schorah - Apr24	32.81
	30/04/2024	Apr24 - HR	Pension Contribution - H Read - Apr24	126.88
Total Officials - NEST Pensions				159.69
S P Barnard				
	30/04/2024	Apr24	Village attendant - Apr 24	987.00
Total S P Barnard				987.00
Stephen Easom				
	30/04/2024	Apr24	Reimbursement for items for Nature Area works - nails, strimmer line, fuel, 2 stroke additive, f...	59.51
Total Stephen Easom				59.51
Three Mobile				
	23/04/2024	104807450007	Monthly Sim card charge for CCTV	6.26
Total Three Mobile				6.26
Vodafone				
	01/04/2024	B4-643768708	Office Phone and Broadband - Apr24	23.93
	27/04/2024	B4-640278481	Office Phone and Broadband - Mar24	11.55
Total Vodafone				35.48
Zurich Insurance				
	22/04/2024	532763531	Insurance for period 01/06/24 to 13/06/24	113.87
	22/04/2024	132383096	Insurance for period 14/06/24 to 13/06/25	2,982.10
Total Zurich Insurance				3,095.97
TOTAL				15,380.10