

FELSTED PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the 1123rd meeting held on 5th June 2024 at 6:30 pm in the Crix Green Mission Hall

Present: Councillors Graham Harvey (Chairman), Alec Fox, Richard Freeman, Hywel Jones, Frances Marshall, John Moore, Andrew Parker, Clive Perrins and Richard Silcock (Parish/District) along with 5 members of the public. Also present was District Councillor John Evans. In attendance: Heather Read (Clerk), Clare Schorah (Assistant Clerk) and Daniel Plunkett (Responsible Finance Officer - RFO).

24/120 **Apologies for Absence**

Apologies had been received from Cllr Roy Ramm, County Cllr Martin Foley and Youth Representative Molly Bennett.

24/121 **Declarations of Interest**

Cllr Richard Silcock declared a pecuniary interest in Item 24/140 Neighbourhood Plan Review and stated that he would not take part in the discussion of that item.

24/122 **Public Forum**

122.1 Unauthorised Fence – The PC were reminded that an unauthorised fence had been erected on the highway verge to the front of Willows Cottage, Evelyn Road, Willows Green several years ago. ECC were notified at the time but took no action. The house is now unoccupied. The Assist Clerk will write to Highways requesting that the fence be removed.

122.2 Verge in Molehill Green Road – The PC noted that an unofficial parking area has been created in Mole Hill Green Road by the dumping tarmac on the verge opposite the Care in the Community Homes. The PC agreed that whilst they could apply to ECC to restore the verge action is unlikely to be taken. The PC will therefore consider undertaking the works themselves.

122.3 Hedge at Brick House Farm – The PC were advised that the hedge is restricting visibility for road users. The Clerk will contact the owner requesting that the hedge be cut back.

24/123 **Minutes of Meeting 1122 held on 1st May 2024**

These Minutes were approved and were signed by the Chairman.

24/124 **Minutes of the Finance Committee Meeting held on the 8th May 2024 and the Planning Committee Meeting held on 21st May 2024**

These Minutes were noted and would be formally approved at the next meetings of the respective committees.

24/125 **Matters Arising from the 1st May Council Meeting**

125.1 Councillor Vacancy (Item 24/99) – The PC noted that the vacancy has been advertised in the Felsted Focus and on the PC website / noticeboards. Applications should be made in writing to the Clerk by Friday 28th June 24.

125.2 Crix Green Mission Hall (Item 24/117.4) – The PC expressed their thanks to Youth Representative Molly Bennett for delivering leaflets to local residents advertising that this month's PC meeting would be at the Crix Green Mission Hall.

24/126 **County Councillor Report**

Members noted that a monthly report had not been received from County Councillor Martin Foley.

24/127 **District Councillors Report**

Members noted the [report](#) from the District Councillors which contained information on the financial support UDC provides to the community. It noted that UDC whilst a collecting agent for the precept only retains 10% of the collected whole. The report moved on to inform residents that the announcement of the Parliamentary (General) Election has delayed the submission of the Local Plan as it gives rise to a period of "purdah" where matters which might be perceived as having a political dimension may not be discussed. The Local Plan will now be submitted to Full Council on 30th July. The report also confirmed that a response to the

Department of Transport's impending consultation on Night Flights has been submitted by UDC's Stansted Airport Advisory Panel

24/128 Correspondence

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

128.1 ECC EV Strategy – The PC agreed to sign a letter of support to assist ECC in delivering implementation of electric vehicle charging points.

128.2 ECC Salt Bag Partnership Scheme 2024/25 – The PC noted that ECC are making salt available for winter use by the community on the local highway. The Clerk advised that there is still plenty of salt left from last year. As it does not store well it was agreed not to order more this year.

128.3 Overgrown Hedge at Causeway End – The PC were advised that the hedge bordering UDC's flats in Chelmsford Road had previously been maintained by a resident but that they were no longer able to continue to do this. The Assist Clerk is striving to establish responsibility for the hedge. DC John Evans has requested UDC's Head of Environmental Services Team to attend the site.

128.4 Farleigh Hospice Cycle for Life Event – The PC confirmed that they had no objections to the planned location of the water stop / checkpoint at Frenches Green on Sunday 8th September 24. It was noted that as in previous years Farleigh Hospice would write to each property in Frenches Green to also seek their permission.

128.5 English Rural – The PC agreed that an affordable flat available for rent in Scholars Close would be advertised on the PC website.

24/129 Finance

129.1 Payments – Members considered the list of payments on page 7. Proposed by Cllr Frances Marshall, seconded by Cllr Andrew Parker the payments list was unanimously approved.

129.2 Receipts – Members noted the receipts of £2429 consisting of: Felsted Focus Advertising £2395; Felsted Focus Donations £7 and Allotment Rental £27.

129.3 2023-24 Year End Accounts – The PC noted that the figures on the top half of page 8 showed that the final actual v budget figures for the financial year ending March 24 came in with a deficit of £17,294 for the year. Reasons for this included daily cleaning of the public toilets, the replacement of the CCTV system, increased salary costs due to pay scale point increases in line with the national pay award and higher than budgeted churchyard maintenance costs.

129.4 2024-25 Year to Date Budget Review

(i) Main PC Account – Cllrs noted that the figures on the bottom half of page 7 showed an estimated actual vs budget surplus for the year end of £4,265. With these figures only representing the first six weeks of the financial year it was agreed that firm conclusions could not be drawn on likely year end surplus or deficits.

(ii) Nature Area Account – Cllrs noted that this account had received £317 of bank interest and spent £533 on maintenance in the year to date, giving net expenditure of £216.

129.5 Consideration of the 2023-24 Internal Audit Report – Cllrs noted that the Internal Audit Report had not yet been received from the Internal Auditor. It will therefore be considered at the July PC meeting.

129.6 Approval of the 2023-24 Audit Annual Governance Statement – It was proposed by Cllr Alec Fox, seconded by Cllr Richard Freeman and unanimously agreed to approve the Annual Governance Statement. The documents were signed by the Chairman and the Clerk prior to submission to the External Auditors.

129.7 Approval of the 2023-24 Audit Accounting Statements and Audit Return – Proposed by Cllr Alec Fox, seconded by Cllr John Moore it was unanimously agreed to approve these documents.

129.8 Adjustment to Reserves – The PC were advised that following the close of the 2023-24 accounts the reserves had moved into deficit. It was agreed that due to current tight finances there could be no planned Capital Expenditure. It was therefore proposed by Cllr John Moore, seconded by Cllr Richard Silcock and unanimously agreed to reduce the Capital Projects Reserve from £50,000 to £10,000 and increase the General Reserve by £40,000.

129.9 Update on NALC Model Financial Regulations – The PC were advised that NALC

have issued new Model Financial Regulations. Due to significant revisions and updates the new regulations are to be treated as a new document rather than a mere revision of the previous version. The RFO and the Clerk will review the new regulations and bring to Council for their consideration at the July PC meeting.

129.10 Alternative Bank Accounts for the Nature Area Funds – The PC noted that the Finance Committee recommended at their meeting on 8th May that a maximum of £80,000 be deposited to a Unity Trust 24m fixed term deposit account with 5% fixed rate interest. This to comprise of all funds held at Metro Bank with the balance of the amount coming from the Barclays Nature Area account (minute F24/20). Proposed by Cllr Richard Silcock, seconded by Cllr Andrew Parker it was unanimously agreed to accept the recommendation of the Finance Committee. The RFO will arrange the transfer of the funds.

129.11 Events Committee Terms of Reference

Proposed by Cllr Frances Marshall, seconded by Cllr Clive Perrins it was unanimously agreed to adopt the Event Committee Terms of Reference.

24/130 **Allotments**

130.1 Termination of Tenancy Agreement – The PC were advised that following the letter written by the Clerk to a plot holder regarding the unsatisfactory condition of their plot (minute 24/107.3) no response had been received and the plot continued to deteriorate. A letter terminating the tenancy agreement had therefore been sent. It was noted that due to the large amount of detritus on the plot a skip would be required to clear it. The PC noted that costs associated with the clearance of the plot could be charged back to the tenancy holder as per their allotment tenancy agreement.

130.2 Community Payback Team – The PC were advised that the Community Payback Team are due to be working on the allotments from Tuesday 11th June – Friday 14th June 24.

130.3 New Plots – The PC were advised that several plot holders appear to have ceased tending their plots. The Clerk will contact the tenancy holders to establish if they wish to give up their tenancies It was noted that this may clear the waiting list for allotment plots. Creation of additional new plots (minute 24/107.2) will therefore be put on hold until this process has been undertaken.

24/131 **URC Burial Ground** – The PC noted that they have a legal obligation to provide burial space for the parish. Representatives from the United Reform Church have confirmed that they will continue to make their burial ground in Chelmsford Road available to residents, It was noted that it has capacity for many decades to come. The URC have suggested that transfer of ownership of the burial ground to the PC might be a possibility. It was proposed by Cllr Richard Freeman, seconded by Cllr Frances Marshall and unanimously agreed that in principle the Parish Council would accept ownership of and responsibility for the burial ground should this be allowed by the Synod.

24/132 **Holy Cross Churchyard** – The PC were advised that due to extremely wet ground JCM Services had not been able to tip grass cuttings into the grass box as the mower would have become stuck. They subsequently supplied a digger free of charge to push the clippings into the box.

24/133 **MUGA Surface** – The PC were advised that the surface of the MUGA has become slippery with algae. It was agreed that the MUGA would be closed pending the removal of the algae.

24/134 **Policies**

134.1 Review Schedule – The PC noted that in accordance with best practice they have a large number of policies all of which are regularly reviewed. The main policies are on the PC website, others are available to view on request in the PC's office.

134.2 Policies to be Drafted – The PC noted that the Assist Clerk continues her work of ensuring that the PC has appropriate policies in place / drafting ones recommended by the EALC.

24/135 **D Day Commemoration - Lighting of the Beacon** -The PC noted that Felsted will be lighting the beacon on Thursday 6th June at 9.15pm to commemorate the 80th Anniversary of D Day.

24/136 **Traffic Survey Station Road** – The PC were advised that ECC Highways now have a revenue budget to fund a speed survey of Station Road together with a junction survey at Chelmsford Road. It is hoped that the surveys will be carried out in the next few weeks.

24/137 **Nature Area**

137.1 Grass Cutting – The PC agreed that Cllr Graham Harvey would discuss the cutting of the Nature Area grass with a local farmer and seek his advice. He will report back to the PC at the July council meeting.

137.2 Willow Tree Maintenance – The PC considered quotes for maintenance works to the Willow trees around the pond area. Proposed by Cllr Frances Marshall, seconded by Cllr Alec Fox it was agreed to accept the quote from JCM Services for £2478 plus vat to coppice all of the Willow trees surrounding the pond area (7 in favour with 2 abstentions).

24/138 **Bury Farm Station Road Development**

138.1 Freedom of Information Appeal – The PC were advised that the Integrated Care Board (ICB) have neither responded to or acknowledged the PC's appeal regarding their refusal to disclose information in response to the PC's Freedom of Information request (minute 24/112). As the 40 day deadline for a response has passed it was proposed by Cllr Richard Freeman, seconded by Cllr Richard Silcock and unanimously agreed that the PC would submit a complaint to the Information Commissioner.

138.2 Open Space – It was noted that a one off payment to the PC of approximately £50,000 will come to the PC via a s106 agreement along with an open space which the PC will have an obligation to maintain.

138.3 Street Light Pole Brackets – The PC have been advised by Mulberry Homes that the existing brackets for the street lighting on Station Road need to be upgraded to meet Essex standards for bracket protection. Once completed ECC will take over responsibility for the street lights concerned.

138.4 Legal Representation – The PC were advised that Mulberry Homes are preparing the legal documents for the Health Centre and the public open space. It was agreed that as with previous matters relating to the development HCR Law will act for the Parish Council. Mulberry Homes will be advised.

24/139 **Felsted Community Trust** – The PC noted that it had been previously agreed that the PC will make donations as needed in tranches to the FCT to fund fees incurred in the setup of the Trust (Minute 23/172/1). It was proposed by Cllr Graham Harvey, seconded by Cllr Frances Marshall and unanimously agreed to transfer £5000 from PC bank accounts to the FCT in order to pay solicitor fees. It is hoped that once in receipt of sufficient income the Trust may return the funds to the PC by way of matching donations

24/140 **Neighbourhood Plan Review / Update** – The PC noted that the work of the FNPSG continues and that they are currently reviewing policies / potential sites for the 85 houses Felsted are legally obliged to supply by 2041.

24/141 **Chairmans Matters**

None were raised.

24/142 **Clerk's Matters**

142.1 Public Toilets

i) Vandalism – The PC were advised that the public toilets were vandalised on Monday 27th May (the bank holiday). The toilets were flooded, paper strewn about and faeces smeared on the walls. A large group of youngsters were seen on CCTV entering the toilets at 3pm in the afternoon not departing until 3.15pm. This has been reported to the police. The PC agreed that the vandalism should be reported to the community via the Felsted Focus and the community facebook page.

ii) Locking of Doors – The PC were advised that the issue with the doors not securing properly when the magnetic locks engaged overnight has been remedied. It was agreed that the manual locking of the doors overnight should cease in order to properly test the overnight locking system.

142.2 Triennial Tree Survey – The PC noted that the survey has now been received. Works to remove deadwood are required on several trees that the PC are responsible for. No other works are required.

142.3 Rospa Report – The PC were advised that the yearly playground safety report has now been received. No high risk issues were identified. Other minor remedial works are under way.

24/143 **Planning Applications and Decisions**

143.1 Applications to be Considered at the next Planning Meeting

UTT/24/1314/HHF - Post Office House Hartford End

New detached single garage.

UTT/24/1276/FUL - Barn At Princes Halfyards Stebbing Road

Demolition of existing Dutch Barn and replacement with 2 no. new dwellings.

143.2 Decisions Received Since Previous Council Meeting

UTT/24/0660/HHF - The Beeches 11A Station Road

Proposed replacement oak porch

Permission Granted - 2nd May 2024

UTT/23/2526/FUL - Land To The West Of Chelmsford Road

Change of use of land to use as a residential caravan site for 5 Gypsy families, each with two caravans, including laying of hardstanding, erection of 5 no. utility buildings and construction of new access.

Permission Refused - 29th April 2024 'The proposed development would result in an intensification in the built form within the immediate area that in turn would alter the character of the surrounding locality and have an urbanising effect that would be out of context with the existing pattern of development harmful to the setting, character and appearance of the countryside.'

UTT/24/0729/HHF - 22 Oxney Villas

Proposed vehicular dropped kerb crossover to enable creation of on-site parking area.

Permission Granted - 8th May 2024

UTT/24/0352/FUL - Glan Howy Bannister Green

Demolition of garage and shed. Erection of 1 no. dwelling (revised scheme to that approved under UTT/23/0515/FUL)

Permission Granted - 13th May 2024

UTT/24/0734/HHF - 18 Ravens Crescent

Two storey front/side/rear extension, single storey rear extension and front entrance canopy.

Permission Granted - 22nd May 2024

UTT/24/0746/LB / UTT/24/0745/HHF - Jollyboys Bakers Lane

Replace the late c20th concrete ground floor with breathable conservation floor. Replace the 1970s cement render & mesh on the external wall with lime-plaster. Replace 1970s front porch for a smaller open oak porch

Permission Granted - 29th May 2024

143.3 Appeal To Be Considered At The Next Planning Meeting

UTT/22/2743/FUL APP/C1570/W/24/3343058 - Land East Of Oaklea Causeway End Road

Erection of 1 no. Dwelling complete with all related works including access.

24/144 **Proposals for Future Agenda Items**

Christmas Tree – The possibility of having 3 or 4 smaller rooted trees (that could later be planted in the Nature Area) instead of one large tree will be discussed later in the year.

There being no further business the meeting closed at 20.49 pm

Next Meetings:

Next Planning Committee Meeting: Tuesday 18th June 24 online at 6.00 pm

Next Council Meeting: Wednesday 3rd July 24 in the URC Hall at 6.30 pm

..... 3rd July 2024

Chairman

Correspondence List – July 2024

<p>1. UDC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Rural Services Network Funding Digest - May 2024 Edition (circ to PC 9/5) b) Premises licence application - Feast 21 Flich Industrial Estate Great Dunmow c) Details of Parish Forum on Monday 10 June 7pm at the Joyce Franklin Academy, Newport.
<p>2. ECC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Temp. Closure Stevens Lane, due to commence on 3rd June 2024 for 29 days. The closure is required to facilitate the installation of new drainage (circ to PC 9/5) b) Temp. Closure of Braintree Road, due to commence on 17th June 2024 for 3 days. The closure is required to facilitate gas main works. (circ to PC 30/5) c) Climate Action Update d) Climate Advice Packs (circ to PC 30/5) e) Letter of Support for their EV Strategy – Request for PC’s to sign (fwd to Cllr RS 17/5) f) Salt Bag Partnership Scheme 2024/25 - Closing date is the 22nd July 2024 g) Community Safety Survey - Open until 30th June (circ to PC 28/5)
<p>3. EALC:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Weekly News e-Bulletins b) PFCC Election Results 2024 (circ to PC 9/5)
<p>4. NALC: Star Council Awards 2024</p>
<p>5. National Highways :</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Supergrid transformer delivery 1-2 June (circ to PC 27/5) b) Works on the A120 Stansted and Panner’s Great Notley Interchange. The renewal of road markings is scheduled for 11 weeks starting Monday 24 June. Work will be carried out on weeknights only, between 8pm and 6am. (circ to PC 27/5)
<p>6. Resident Letter re Overgrown Hedge at Causeway End</p>
<p>7. Stansted Airport Watch (SAW): Reminder Department for Transport’s Night Flights Consultation closes 22 May (fwd to Cllr JM 14/5)</p>
<p>8. AEF Update from Airspace and Noise Community Forum (fwd to Cllr JM 15/5)</p>
<p>9. RCCE:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Essex Village of the Year & Rural Community Awards 2024 b) Essex Warbler June Edition (circ to PC 30/5)
<p>10. CPRE: May Campaigns Update (circ to PC 9/5)</p>
<p>11. English Rural: Flat for Rent Scholars Close</p>
<p>12. Farleigh Hospice: Cycle for Life Event Sunday 8th September 24</p>

Final Actual v Budget Comparison Y/E 31 March 2024

		Budget 2023-24		Actual 2023-24		Actual - Budget	
		£	£	£	£	£	£
Opening Balance			55,161		55,161		
INCOME							
	Precept	113,950		113,950		0	
	Allotments Rents	1,700		2,078		378	
	Playing field rent	500		970		470	
	Grants	0		5,572		5,572	
	Sundry other receipts	0		1,501		1,501	
	Magazine advertising & donations	2,150		3,845		1,695	
Total Income			118,300		127,916		9,616
EXPENSES							
	Salary and Expenses		42,013		51,285		9,271
	Street Lighting		12,799		8,675		-4,124
	Administration		12,511		13,411		899
	Maintenance, repairs and upkeep		32,210		47,813		15,603
	Projects		7,950		3,386		-4,564
	Sundry		5,257		15,083		9,825
Total Expenses			112,742		139,651		26,910
Closing Balance			60,719		43,426		-17,294
Includes Reserves carried forward:							
	Capital Projects Reserve (Public Toilets, Playing Field car park, etc)		50,000		50,000		
	Repairs & Maintenance Reserve		6,900		6,900		
	Risk Assessment Reserve		1,200		1,200		
	General Reserve		2,619		-14,674		

Actual v Budget Comparison to 2nd May 2024

		Budget 2022-23		Actual 2022-23		Year End Estimate		YE Estimate - Budget	
		£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Opening Balance			43,426		43,426		43,426		
INCOME									
	Precept	128,765		64,383		128,765		0	
	Allotments Rents	1,700		0		1,700		0	
	Playing field rent	1,050		0		1,050		0	
	Grants	1,000		0		1,000		0	
	Sundry other receipts	500		0		500		0	
	Magazine advertising & donations	4,660		2,392		3,000		-1,660	
Total Income			137,675		66,775		136,015		-1,660
EXPENSES									
	Salary and Expenses		51,322		3,502		51,395		74
	Street Lighting		8,841		418		10,508		1,667
	Administration		11,773		2,530		11,867		94
	Maintenance, repairs and upkeep		43,260		4,813		45,117		1,857
	Projects		6,750		0		6,750		0
	Sundry		13,012		3,396		3,396		-9,616
Total Expenses			134,958		14,659		129,034		-5,925
Closing Balance			46,143		95,541		50,407		4,265
Includes Reserves carried forward:									
	Capital Projects Reserve (Public Toilets, Playing Field car park, etc)		50,000		10,000		10,000		
	Repairs & Maintenance Reserve		6,900		6,900		6,900		
	Risk Assessment Reserve		1,200		1,200		1,200		
	General Reserve		-11,957		77,441		32,307		

Unpaid List – June 2024

	Date	Num	Memo	Open Balance	Payment Ref
Astragraphic Design Ltd					
	26/05/2024	613	Monthly charge for Adobe Software Creative Cloud Suite	51.98	
Total Astragraphic Design Ltd				51.98	240501
B & H M Baker					
	31/05/2024	1685	13 bags of compost and 24 boxes begonias for village plant tubs	279.50	
Total B & H M Baker				279.50	240502
British Gas - BGL465975					
	28/05/2024	7777813	MUGA Electricity for period 28/04/24 to 28/05/24 - Account BGL465975, MPAN 1030072525215, Meter ...	28.21	
Total British Gas - BGL465975				28.21	Direct Debit
Castle Water - 2595497					
	02/05/2024	10002132926	Ac # 2595497 - Allotment water supply (Station Road) 01/04/24 to 30/04/24 - SPID 301337036XW1X -...	128.96	
Total Castle Water - 2595497				128.96	Credit on Account
EDF - Pavillion - A-40851E59					
	03/06/2024	003	Pavillion Electricity - period 01/05/24 to 31/05/24 - Meter # 22S1091521 - MPAN 1012485770570	114.18	
Total EDF - Pavillion - A-40851E59				114.18	Direct Debit
Felsted Community Trust					
	31/05/2024	Donation	Donation to Felsted Community Trust towards setup expenses	5,000.00	
Total Felsted Community Trust				5,000.00	240512
JCM Services					
	17/05/2024	1885	Nature Area - cutting hemlock and remove 4x stumps	1,200.00	
Total JCM Services				1,200.00	800039
Jean Grimshaw					
	31/05/2024	02-4609	water butt and edging for Village plant tubs	44.99	
Total Jean Grimshaw				44.99	240503
Julie Smith					
	31/05/2024	May 23	Cleaning and Maintenance of Playing Field Toilets - May 23	387.50	
Total Julie Smith				387.50	240504
Lee Heron					
	28/05/2024	May24	Unlocking car park 1 - May24	60.00	
	31/05/2024	May24 - Toilets	Locking / unlocking playing field toilets	60.00	
Total Lee Heron				120.00	240505
Officials - Salary					
	31/05/2024	May24 - Salary		3,309.50	
Total Officials - Salary				3,309.50	240506, 240507, 240508
Officials - Expenses					
	31/05/2024	May24 - Exp	Clerk's expenses - May 2024- Zoom subscription, Google Suite & computer support package, monthl... Asst Clerk Expenses - May24 - mobile phone monthly contract RFO Expenses - May 2024 - Mileage, SLCC VAT Training	176.14	
Total Officials - Expenses				176.14	240506, 240507, 240508
Officials - NEST Pensions					
	20/05/2024	May24 - CS	Pension Contribution - C Schorah - May24	32.81	
	20/05/2024	May24 - HR	Pension Contribution - H Read - May24	126.88	
Total Officials - NEST Pensions				159.69	Direct Debit
Paul Clark Printing Limited					
	31/05/2024	31712	Printing Felsted Focus - Summer 2024	1,148.00	
Total Paul Clark Printing Limited				1,148.00	240509
Playsafety Ltd					
	22/05/2024	79392	Annual Play equipment inspection	436.80	
Total Playsafety Ltd				436.80	240510
S P Barnard					
	31/05/2024	May24	Village attendant - 24	1,008.00	
Total S P Barnard				1,008.00	240511
Three Mobile					
	23/05/2024	104807450008	Monthly Sim card charge for CCTV	6.26	
Total Three Mobile				6.26	Direct Debit
Vodafone					
	27/04/2024	B4-647290254	Office Phone and Broadband - May24	25.82	
Total Vodafone				25.82	Direct Debit
TOTAL				13,625.53	