

PARISH OF HEMPSTEAD

Minutes of the Meeting of Hempstead Parish Council held on Thursday 30th March 2023

Present: Nick Turkentine (Chair), David Drane, Diana Frost, James Nicholson, Mark Welbourn, District Councillor George Smith, the Clerk and 1 member of the public

The Parish Council meeting started at 8pm

22/125 Apologies for Absence County Councillor Martin Foley

22/126 Public Forum – brief discussion regarding the triangle of land at High Street/Hill Road/Anso Road junction with a member of the public who was considering its purchase.

22/127 Declarations of Interest

22/128 Reports from District and/or County Councillors

District Councillor Smith gave a brief update:

Local Plan – new date for the start of its consultation is October 2023, with adoption hopefully in 2025.

Uttlesford Blueprint – management of finances and the services UDC offers to the public. Ring-fenced number looking to decrease by 20%, hoping that reduction in staff numbers can be achieved by natural attrition. Noted that licensing is a ring-fenced area which cannot create a profit.

ROBINN Group – noted that they had been in contact with Kemi Badenoch MP, and her office were looking into how best to provide support.

Wethersfield – possibility of Uttlesford supporting Braintree Council in objecting to the creation of an asylum centre at the old airfield. Noted the lack of infrastructure.

22/129 Minutes of Previous Meeting of Thursday 23rd February were approved and signed by the Chair.

22/130 Finance

Item 1 – to receive a financial update from the Clerk. Current Account balance is £751.75 and the reserve account is £10,313.73. The first tranche of the 2023/24 Precept should be received on or around 21st April.

Item 2 – 2 quotes for new grass cutting contractor were considered. The Council unanimously agreed to appoint Outdoor Jack, but move the cutting schedule to every 3 weeks to ensure affordability, and review after 3 months.

Item 3 – a payment of £261.93 to Brian Kitchen for the renewal of the village website for 2 years was approved.

22/131 Planning to review and comment on new planning applications and to note any decisions as at 24/03/23.

Chaseside Cottage: UTT/23/0644/HHF. Proposed double garage. NO COMMENTS REQUIRED

1 Lake House Farm Cottages: UTT/23/0542/HHF. Provision of 2 off road parking spaces and new means of enclosure. NO COMMENTS REQUIRED

Barns At Little Smiths Green Farm: UTT/23/0489/PAQ3. Prior notification of change of use of 2 agricultural buildings to 5 dwellings. NO COMMENTS REQUIRED

Shepherds Cottage: UTT/23/0097/FUL. AWAITING DECISION

Little Orchard: UTT/23/0139/HHF. AWAITING DECISION

Fairview Bungalow: UTT/22/1872/FUL. AWAITING DECISION

Parish Planning Forum – Diana Frost had attended the forum, which was attended by 32 parishes. She noted that pre-application training will be offered, which she will likely attend in May. The question of whether architects need to specify the height of buildings in drawings used for applications was raised, and it was confirmed that height is not required as long as the scale used is included on the document.

22/132 Councillor Code of Conduct – the Parish Council voted unanimously to adopt the new LGA model code of conduct now followed by Uttlesford District Council, available at:

<https://www.uttlesford.gov.uk/article/6343/The-Councillors-Code-of-Conduct>.

22/133 Correspondence

Ambo Magazine – the Council unanimously agreed that no funding would be provided to AMBO.

West Essex Virtual Hospital service – agreed that it needn't be publicised to residents as it is a referral service.

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22/134 **Triangle of Land** – the Chairman noted that a firm of solicitors are looking into whether it may be possible for the land to be registered as a Village Green.

22/135 **Parish Council Elections in May** all the nomination papers delivered to UDC for the currently sitting Parish Councillors. Information on the upcoming elections had been included in the April Newsletter that was sent out on 30th March.

22/136 **Coronation of King Charles III** – the Clerk noted that no residents had yet been in contact regarding organising further celebrations. The Clerk to make an application to UDC for the full £700 grant available, to cover Bluebell II costs and decorations.

22/137 **Speedwatch/Police speed checks** The Clerk wrote to the local PCSO on 6th March requesting that the Police return to carry out another speedwatch activity at a time when traffic will be heavier (rush hour and not in school holidays). No reply has been received. The Clerk will make further contact.

22/138 **Reports from Councillors**

Highways and Rights of Way David Drane continues to report potholes to Essex Highways. Noted that Uttlesford Ramblers have offered their services, if required, for footpath maintenance. Overgrown hedgerow at the bottom end of Anso Road, which is now encroaching on the road – the Chairman to investigate the ownership.

Environment Tree Survey – the Clerk to contact neighbouring Parish Councils asking how often they have their trees surveyed.

Communications Hempstead Village Website – it was unanimously agreed by the Council that the village/Parish Council needed an upgraded website, that is more sustainable and resilient, and easier to maintain without outside input, which would save money in the long term. The Chairman had received a quote from Watch the Dot, a Wordpress agency/consultancy, who are able to create a new Wordpress website, including layout and initial set-up/transfer from existing website, for £1750. Following discussion, the Council unanimously agreed to accept this quote and that it could be funded from the Parish Council reserve account. **An initial payment of £400 was approved to allow for work to commence as soon as possible.**

Flooding drains have recently cleared by still no movement from Highways on Anso Road ditches. Water increasingly flowing onto High Street from adjoining field and it was queried whether this is due to inadequate field drainage. The Chairman to speak to the farmer.

22/139 **Matters Arising requiring decisions, to be included on the next Agenda** None

22/140 **Future Meeting Dates:** Wednesday, 26th April. Thursday, 18th May for Annual Meeting of the Parish Council and Friday, 26th May for the Annual Parish meeting. It was agreed to hold a meeting on 15th June 2023.

The meeting ended at 21:54pm