

Minutes of Langham Parish Council
Remote Meeting held on
Wednesday 3rd March 2021 7:30pm

Present: Cllr Dawson, Cllr Martin Bottwood, Cllr Tony Ellis. Cllr Annette Thorpe,
Cllr Sally Brockman, Cllr Tony Emms.
Borough Cllr Nigel Chapman
4 members of the public
Clerk Carol Harbach

20/128 Welcome and apologies for absence

Cllr Dawson welcomed everyone to the remote meeting of the Parish Council (PC) and went on to explain the rules of the meeting.

20/129 Declaration of Members Interest

Any declarations of interest will be brought up and declared as they arise on the agenda.

20/130 Agree Minutes from the last Parish Council (PC) meeting 3rd February 2021

These minutes were proposed by Cllr Bottwood and seconded by Cllr Emms.
Agreed by all.

20/131 Matters arising from last meeting held 3rd February 2021.

Rec Ground – to discuss dates of works and checking the of completion of works by contractors.
Will go to Rec Ground meeting 11th March 2021. **Ongoing.**
Unreconciled accounts -later on agendas
Finance Regulations – later on agenda
One item on the expenditure list from last month was unable to be signed off due to the online access problem this will be picked up this month for payment.

20/132 Public Open Forum (Maximum 15 minutes) Questions to be noted and answered at the next meeting.

Cllr Lewis Barber had no questions but thanked the council for letting him attend this meeting.
Cllr Barber stated that there was a letter on the way to the parish council with details of the coming borough council elections. Cllr. Barber does work with Cllr Brown and has regular meetings with her and has worked with the local planning panel in the past.

20/133 Visitors Reports (CBC and County Councillors)

Cllr Chapman's report stated there has been little information from Colchester regarding the Local Plan part 2 and this is due to be discussed on 12th April. Cllr Chapman could see nothing untoward at the moment but will be keeping an eye on anything that comes out.
Both councils are in election modes at the moment and this can cause things to stagnate, but this will pick up again soon. Cllr Chapman thinks a cross-view across Dedham, Boxted and Ardleigh is needed to come together as there are issues that act on all boundaries, but this will not happen until after May. Christopher Arnold is standing down in the coming Borough elections.
It was mentioned by the PC that they have viewed the documents of part 2 but there was not a lot of information regarding villages and rural areas in this. Cllr Chapman said it may happen after 2033 but it is likely it will be reviewed again before then.

20/134 Finance

134.1 Matters arising from the Finance Committee on 2nd March 2021

Three items from this meeting are coming up on the agenda, These are the Finance regulations, contractors invoices for annual maintenance with the Recreation Ground, and the Clerks pay recommendation.

**135.2 To approve payments in accordance with the 2020/21 Budget
Recommended for approval from the Finance Committee**

For February/March 2021;

<u>Income</u> Football pitch hire from Langham Lodgers due from Oct 2020	54.00
<u>Expenditure:</u>	
Contractor Invoice 2-21	132.00
Mrs. C. Harbach – Clerk Salary February 2021	785.60
HMRC Employers – NI contributions	13.49
Bowman & Sons – Hedge cutting at Community Centre	300.00
Previous un-reconciled Cheque Q102756 24.4.2019	74.50
Langham Community Centre room hire	
Previous un-reconciled Cheque Q102751 24.4.2019	30.00
Essex Playing Field competition	
Previous un-reconciled Cheque Q102773 3.7.2019	45.00
Spingold – Via PCC Bosted and Langham Newsletter	
Contractor Invoice 3-21	168.00
The Community Heartbeat Trust Ltd – telephone system	120.00
Springold Design & Print Ltd – envelopes for survey	102.00
Mrs. C. Harbach – Clerk Salary March 2021 pd 28 th March 21	785.60
HMRC Employers – NI contributions March 2021 pd 28 th March 21	13.49
Total	£ 2,569.68 =====

Proposed Cllr Bottwood seconded Cllr Thorpe All agreed

These payments will be authorised by Cllr Dawson and Cllr Bottwood and paid on line.
Proposed Cllr Bottwood seconded Dawson. All agreed.

20/135 Planning/Housing

135.1 Applications for discussion at meeting.

210168: Land off Langham Lane/Park Lane – an application for an additional agricultural dwelling for P.G. Rix. Objection comment. The proposed dwelling is located outside the settlement boundary in countryside. Other accommodation is available in close proximity to Langham with established dwellings and a recently approved development of 46 new dwellings. The need for personal site occupation is significantly reduced by technological methods for remote security of the site. We also have concerns that the information provided is inadequate to allow the Parish Council to make fully informed comments on this application and are also concerned that this application may be a precursor to further applications for development by the applicant

210171: Land to the rear of Langham Cottage. Objection comment. There is a long and chequered planning history for this whole site, as evidenced by other objections posted on the Council website. The previous application was refused by the Borough Council and the appeal dismissed by the Planning Inspector. This re-submission contains only minor modifications from the previous submission. We therefore endorse the earlier decisions of the Borough Council to refuse the application and that of the Planning Inspector to dismiss the appeal and object to the current application on those grounds.

210300 Cherry Tree Cottage, Park Lane, Langham Colchester CO4 5NN
Re-submission of 200897: Proposed dormer two and single storey rear extension (replacing existing) and including other alterations. Objection comment. Whilst we recognise that modifications have been made to the size and aspect of the proposed dwelling, the reasons for refusal of 200897 still remain and support the comments made by the Parish Council on this application. We therefore reiterate our comments made for 200897.

Clerk to add these to the CBC planning site **Action**.

The council has received information regarding the Public examination of Part 2 of the Local Plan (2017-2033) which covers villages including Langham. These meetings will take place via zoom between Tuesday 20th April 2021 and Friday 30th April 2021. Langham will come under North Essex on the 2nd day Wednesday 21st April 2021.

Cllr Ellis has contacted Cllr Brown again regarding this and requested if there was anymore information on this matter. It was also mentioned in the email the building is clearly a heritage asset for the village and parts of the property are nationally listed. It is a shame that the main building is not listed as it is both of architectural and historic interest. Cllr Brown has requested information on the sale of The Oaks from CBC and we are waiting to hear back from Cllr Brown.

The County council are disposing of this site and hope to have this for sale by the end of year. The PC are waiting for progress on this from Cllr Brown.

The County council are disposing of this site - The Oaks - and hope to have this for sale by the end of year. The PC are waiting for progress on this from Cllr Brown. **Ongoing**

135.2 Planning Applications – Observations conveyed under delegated authority since last meeting.

Will be available on the Colchester Borough Council Planning website.

20/136 Clerk Report and Correspondence

136.1 Correspondence

1. The councils response to a resident's letter regarding Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic candidates which was received last month – the PC were notified that the address did not exist so therefore the reply letter was not received by the originator. If the council are contacted by the originator again by another method eg email then the reply will be sent. **Action Clerk** if any further information is received and to inform PC at next meeting.
2. The council has been informed by the Highways department of temporary road closures on Greyhound Hill, Water Lane, High Street, Rectory Road- Nightingale Hill, Park Lane, School Road and Dedham Road for resurfacing and broadband works.

Some of the link information received is not correct and we are waiting for these to be confirmed by Cllr Brown before the updated information is published.

Action Cllr Bottwood to update the website once the information is confirmed.

3. The council has received a letter from Woodland creations offering up to 200 free trees of UK native species for the Parish Councils. **Action** Recreation ground.
4. PC has had a reply from a resident who did not like the name that was suggested to CBC for the new name on the Linden Home site of "Discovery Way".
Action this was noted but the name had already been sent to CBC.

20/137 Councillor's Reports

Cllr Ellis – The questionnaires to residents that have been sent out regarding Williamsons proposal for 30 dwellings in School Road have been a success. 350 were sent out and the PC have about 85 returned. Evaluations are taking place at moment and in some cases there have been two responses per household with approx. 150 actual responses. In the first instance very few have supported this proposal but the PC are only part way through the evaluation. Cllr Bottwood has spoken to Malcolm Inkster and the PC reply will be sent to him as soon as possible. There is a planning meeting planned next week to move this forward.

Cllr Bottwood informed the meeting that at the moment the website it not running. This is due to a server failure which has affected the whole system including backup capabilities. This crash has effected 300 sites, 70% are now back up and running. At the moment the company are now trying to get all the sites back up and running and have four staff working 24hrs a day to rectify this. The PC may need to work on anything that is missing and this will be updated as and when this happens. Hopefully it will only be documents, if anything, that is missing which can then be uploaded again. A question was asked about the companies host and back up system. The prime concern was to get the website back up and running. The relevant questions will be asked once this has been resolved but currently the PC do not want to distract the company from getting the sites back on line but this will be followed up. **Action** Cllr Bottwood.

Cllr Bottwood took part in a 20 minutes meeting with Cllr Chapman, Cllr Brown and Cllr Bentley as Cllr Chapman had mentioned earlier. The meeting discussed the traffic and planning issues around Langham, Dedham and Ardleigh with some emphasis on the Ardleigh interchange. Cllr Bentley stated he was aware of the situation and problems surrounding this area and the meeting was well worth it from the PC point of view.

Cllr Emms – the verges in village have taken battering this year and are a mess. The broadband cabling work that is being completed is being left in a poor condition. When the work is being completed the verges are being run over by vehicles that are going past the work, this is currently being completed by the company RAM. There is no contract between the village and these companies and the only thing the PC can do is contact RAM or Gigaclear directly. This should ne followed up when the works have been competed. Some of the residents are also getting involved and have been complaining directly to the companies and obtaining some results. Some residents after complaining, have had the company come back to level off the areas and reinstating grass seed.

It was thought that the PC will wait until the works have been completed and if the PC are not happy with the result the Clerk will be requested to send a letter to Gigaclear directly, and request things are put right.

Cllr Brockman – no report at the moment has some comments of other upcoming agenda items.

Cllr Thorpe – no report at the moment.

Cllr Bottwood – items covered later on agenda.

20/138 Agreement to change the Finance Regulations regarding payments in August and December when the council do not meet.

The Finance committee met last night and would like to add the following statement to the Finance Regulations so the council do not need to meet over August and December to make payments that are due. This was discussed by the PC and various questions were raised and answered.

The statement to be agreed is as follows;

4.1a During the months of August and December (when the council do not meet) the Clerk/RFO, in conjunction with the Chairman of the Council, can agree items due for payment below £1000 and subject to 4.5. These items can be authorised and paid when agreed by both parties. These payments are to be made by the usual two signatures system and should only be made in circumstances when it would be unreasonable for the recipient of the payment to wait until the next meeting. These payments are to be reported to all councillors and reported at the next full council meeting. For any item which is over £1000 an extraordinary meeting will be called for the full council to agree payment.

Proposed Cllr Thorpe seconded Cllr Ellis

Vote to agree the statement circulated for the additional paragraph to be added to the Finance Regulations.

For the addition: 5 Against the addition: 1 – Cllr Tony Emms
Motion carried

This will be added in to the Finance regulations by the Clerk and re distributed to all councillors and can be reviewed again at a later time if required. **Action** Clerk

20/139 Local Council Awards update

The Clerk has requested not to start this until April after the end of the financial year so the correct amount of time can be given to this. The Clerk will still register for this now and start work on this in April.

Proposed by Cllr Emms seconded by Cllr Ellis. All agreed. **Action** Clerk

20/140 Agree dates for coming years Langham Parish Council Meetings

A proposed list of dates for the forthcoming meetings has been distributed by the Clerk and are traditionally the 1st Wed in the month at 7:30pm. There is a question around the May meeting where traditionally the council elect the Chair/Vice Chair and committee for the following year and as the Council elections are on the 6th May this year it has been suggested that rather than complete this twice, to delay the process to the following week 12th May when the results of the election should be in. Proposed by Cllr Emms seconded by Cllr Bottwood. All agreed to move the date to the 12th May.

20/141 Agree a way forward for legal support on clarification of Council documents

It has come to light recently that the documents that the PC hold are not complete and there are major gaps. Hanslip Ward & Co Solicitors have some, but not all the PC documents. The PC do need to resolve this and the suggested idea is to get all documents together so the PC have all

relevant documents including those relating to the PC as Custodian Trustee of the Community Centre

Essex Records Office also need to be contacted to see what documents they may have regarding this.

Once we have as many documents that we can collate together the PC may need to get professional advise to clarify any unclear matters relating to the deeds and documentation. There is also a need to ensure that the Land Registry has up to date information.

Vote to agree gathering all the relevant documentation of the PC and to clarify any ownership concerns including legal responsibilities

Proposed by Cllr Dawson seconded by Cllr Bottwood.

All agreed Motion carried.

Vote to have a working group for this and for the named Cllr to take ownership of this.

An open discussion was held around ownership issues of the Community Centre site. A member of the public was asked to comment on this as he was involved in the original events . The key question was based on the intention of the PC when the conveyancing document was agreed. The resident stated that at the time a steering group had been set up by the Chair of the PC and the Chair of the CC. The aim of the steering group was for the PC to buy the land so the CC could put a building on it but the land would continue to be owned by the PC. The conveyancing document appears to be ambiguous and this needs to be clarified.

The resident will speak to the former chair of the CC and another resident who may be able to provide information.. The resident who attended the meeting also believed it was the PC that put in the original planning application for the Community Centre.

The vote was for Cllr Bottwood to take ownership of this with help and input from Cllr Thorpe.

Proposed by Cllr Dawson seconded by Cllr Ellis. All agreed

20/142 Footpath 29, resident's opportunity to comment

Cllr Brockman updated the council on the meetings she had with the landowner and subsequent visits that she had made regarding the moving of footpath 26.

A long discussion followed and a lot of questions and opinions were heard.

The Clerk also read out an email that she had received from a resident regarding this footpath.

The PC agreed for Cllr Brockman to put something together that could be put on to the website for residents to look at and comment on. A message can also be put on Langham Locals notifying residents that information is available on the website. The website should show clear information on the location of the footpath and a short clear explanation of the landowners proposal. Collated comments from responders can then be provided to the landowner.

It was also suggested that Cllr Brockman also talks to previous Cllr Stacey as he had a lot of knowledge, history and information on this and surrounding footpaths in the village. **Action** Cllr Brockman to get the information together for input the website. And to talk to Andrew Stacey.

20/143 Agree the PC stance on S106 submissions

Cllr Ellis has been engaging with CBC Community Enablers regarding S106 funding and there is a meeting between the PC and CBC via a zoom call on 11th March to progress the requirements for

funding to be released and to discuss new requirements. The agreed aim is for the PC to coordinate responses to CBC for requirements from a number of parties that may qualify for funding. Terms of Reference (T.o.r) for this role will be required. The two key areas identified, both of which have Community Enablers, are Community Facilities and Parks & Recreation.

Vote for the group to be set up including PC and other parties including draft T.o.R to enable this to move forward.

This was discussed and Cllr Ellis will take ownership of this and work with other Councillor's/groups

Proposed by Cllr Dawson seconded by Cllr Bottwood. All agreed

20/144 Agree a date for issuing the village Traffic Survey

The PC need to send out a traffic survey for residents comments, this was originally delayed due to Covid and its restrictions. The rationale being that with significantly reduced traffic levels residents may not see this as a current priority. When the survey is distributed the PC want to get a good return on the replies so the PC can give Highways a good response. There seems to be a view from residents that there is ever increasing traffic levels and the incidents of speeding and erratic driving behavior is also increasing. The PC are looking at ways these issues can be alleviated once input has been obtained from residents and a questionnaire will be issued to collect data. The key item that needed to be considered was the timing for the issue of the survey/questionnaire. One resident in particular who is regularly involved in speed checks felt that now would be a good time to do a survey as people had more time on their hands.

A discussion took place was on whether the survey should:

- i) be done as soon as possible
- ii) be done at an agreed time but later
- iii) be delayed until things get back to normal and then scheduled.

Item iii) was favoured by the Council, this was also supported by the two residents that were present at the meeting.

Proposed by Cllr Emms seconded by Cllr Dawson. All agreed

Cllr Thorpe left the meeting at 9:10pm. Cllr Thorpe stated she had emailed the General Manager at Essex regarding the state of the verges and he replied stating he will look at this and get back to the PC. Meeting still quorate so continued.

20/145 Agree a revised questionnaire budget

The PC is currently near to its budget spend for surveys, which includes the license and printing of questionnaires and envelopes. The budget was originally £300 and the PC are approaching this spend without the postal charges. We have identified another two surveys and additional funding is required for printing and more envelopes. Accordingly, the Finance committee would like an increase in the budgets to complete these activities. The requirement is an increase to the current year's budget of £100 and to increase the budget total for next year to £300 so the surveys can start in the new year.

Proposed by Cllr Tony Ellis seconded by Cllr Emms. All agreed.

20/146 Agree the PC actions in support of local council elections and 20/149

The process for the election will be notified by the Clerk when the information is available from Colchester Council. The PC have been recruiting for the vacancy it has at the moment. The PC have interviewed 8 candidates and now have a short list and by May the PC might have more than one vacancy. It was discussed and the candidates have been informed that there are elections in May.

The PC can co-opt one candidate at the moment as a councillor and the PC may possibly have another vacancy in May. It was suggested to offer the other successful candidates a position on a committee to enable them to see how the PC works and what is involved. One of these candidates was also happy to sit on a working group.

It was agreed to send responses out and to give information to the successful candidates there may be 2 vacancies, 1 now and 1 in May. The PC did not want to lose these candidates who would add value to the PC. The PC Identified 1 can be co-opt straight away, 1 could be on a committee as member of public and possibly co-opt them later and the 3rd stay on committee/working group. It was suggested 1 for Planning and Recreation Ground Committee each and 1 for a committee/work group as a member of public. The candidates were explained this during the interview process.

Cllr Emms to write the letters to all the candidates with the input from Cllr Ellis and Cllr Bottwood. **Action** Cllr Emms.

Proposed by Cllr Bottwood seconded by Cllr Ellis. All agreed.

The Clerk reminded the Chairman the meeting was approaching the two hour time frame and it was agreed to carry on with the meeting, rather than defer.

20/147 Agree a revised bank signatory list

The Finance Committee need another bank signatory on the list as sometimes it is not able to get payments finalised by Councillors who are available.

Cllr Thorpe was suggested and was prepared to accept this position to be another signature on the bank account. **Action** Finance Committee

Proposed by Cllr Ellis seconded by Cllr Bottwood. All agreed.

20/148 Agree the principles for an events/facilities working or steering group

Cllr Emms and Mrs. Shouksmith have looked at utilising the Recreation Ground in the future. Cllr Emms has reported back to the Recreation Ground committee on this and Mrs. Shouksmith has reported to the trustees of the CC. As a result it has been agreed that village facilities should be considered beyond the Recreation Ground alone. It has been suggested to put a steering/working group together and to produce a survey for residents for their opinions and suggestions relating to the Recreation Ground and other suitable areas in the village. The working group should also consider other ways of gathering information such as face to face meetings.

It was suggested that a draft T.o.R would be produced by the group so the whole group were working with the same ideas and objectives.

Vote on this working group

Proposed by Cllr Bottwood seconded by Cllr Ellis. All agreed. **Action** Cllr Emms to identify the group and draft a T.o.R document.

20/149 Agree the reporting and recruiting process following Cllr candidate interviews

See 20/146 above.

20/150 Clarify actions required for end of year meetings (AGM etc)

The Annual Parish Meeting (APM) is due to take place next month and the Chair will send out the agenda. An invitation to this meeting will also be given to the Chair of the CC – Alan Cadman for his annual report of the Community Centre.. There is usually a short LPC meeting attached to this for anything that needs to be brought back to the council.

Proposed by Cllr Dawson seconded by Cllr Emms. All agreed.

20/151 Agree Clerk’s pay recommendation

The Staffing committee have reviewed the Clerk’s pay recommendation. A proposal was put to the Finance committee and this has been agreed for recommendation at this full committee meeting. Councillors were all notified of the suggested pay increase in advance of this meeting.

Proposed by Cllr Bottwood seconded by Cllr Ellis. All agreed.

20/152 Items for the next agenda

Any items for the APM or LPC Meeting are to be given to the Clerk.

20/153 To confirm date and time of next meeting

Date of next remote Meeting 7th April 2021 7:30pm

Cllr Dawson thanked everyone for their attendance.

The Council meeting finished at 9:40 pm.

Signed

Cllr Dawson

Date