

**Minutes**  
**Langham Parish Council (PC)**  
**Annual Parish Meeting (APM)/Annual Assembly**

**Present** Chair Cllr Bottwood, Cllr Brockman, Cllr Armstrong, Cllr Palmer, Cllr Thorpe, Cllr Ogawa.  
Attendance Clerk Carol Harbach  
Colchester Borough Council Cllr Chapman, Cllr Barber Essex County Council from 8pm  
11 Members of the public.

**22/432 Explanation of how the meeting will run.**

Cllr Bottwood thanked members of the public for attending the meeting and reminded everyone that this was not a Parish Council meeting but an assembly of the village electorate and it was an opportunity for Langham residents to discuss and debate issues in an open forum.

**Parish Council's role at this meeting**

It was explained that the Parish Council has a duty to facilitate the meeting on behalf of the electorate and provide a report. This would be done in two sections which were the Chairman's report and a report from the Clerk and RFO who would provide an update on the Parish Council's financial position.

In addition to the Parish Council input Alan Cadman, the Chairman of the Langham Community Council would provide an input on the Community Centre activities during the past year.

An agenda for this event had been posted and residents had been asked to provide any key agenda topics that they would like discussed. It was also stated that as the meeting belongs to the electorate any key issues that they wished to discuss, which had not been captured by the agenda, could still be debated. The Chairman then asked if there were any further items that attendees would like to discuss and could be addressed under agenda item 22/448 which was the Open Forum. One item which related to the East Anglian Green Energy project had already been added. Any actions identified from this meeting that fall under the remit of the Parish Council, would be added to the agenda for the first full meeting of the new Parish Council which was due to take place on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2022.

**22/433 Welcome and apologies for absence**

Apologies were accepted and received from Cllr Freeman. Apologies were also received from Shannon Barnes.

**22/434 Declaration of Members interests**

None raised

**22/435 Agree Minutes from the last Annual Parish Meeting - 28<sup>th</sup> April 2021**

These were agreed to be an accurate and true copy. Proposed Cllr Bottwood and seconded Cllr Armstrong all agreed.

Common land – It had been confirmed that the area of land at the junction of Moor Road/Park Lane and half way down Greyhound Hill - the triangle on the left - were common land.

**22/436 Matters arising from the last Annual Parish Meeting**

There were no ongoing matters from last year's meeting.

**22/437 Parish Council Chairman's report**

Cllr Bottwood read out his report from the last year. A copy is attached as an appendix with these minutes.

A question was asked relating to an item in the report regarding the "thanks to residents" who look after pots around the village. It was questioned who was responsible for looking after the new pots/planters on pub corner. These are the responsibility of The Recreation Ground Committee and are being watered by some children who are residents of the village.

**22/438 Parish Council Finance report**

The clerk read out the pre audit report figures which are also attached in an appendix to these minutes.

**22/439 Visitors Report from the Community Council, Ward and County Councils**

Community Council – Report attached

Ward & County Councillors – no separate reports provided. Points were picked up under agenda items.

**22/440 Public Open Forum**

Discussion items suggested by the electorate

**Vistry Homes Development**

There were concerns from the residents at the meeting that the Vistry Homes development had been started when there were still concerns that the Langham Water Recycling Centre and the local sewerage network did not have capacity or an additional 46 houses. Cllr Bottwood explained that the Local Planning Authority (LPA) seeks guidance on these matters from Anglian Water (AW) and the Environment Agency (EA), the latter have responsibility for issuing permits that addresses the water quality and throughput targets. The Parish Council is a statutory consultee but have no formal power to influence decisions. Based on information provided by the EA and AW the LPA have agreed that 50% of the site can be built which is a cautious approach and the situation will be closely monitored.

Sir Bernard Jenkin attended a meeting with AW, the PC and Langham residents regarding the concerns that Langham residents have on Sewage capacity issues and network overflows. AW said the WRC could cope with the waste and there were no issues with the supporting network infrastructure. The PC were asked by AW to provide supporting information on network overflows but some of this goes back over the last few years. However, the PC agreed to follow this up. The point was made that AW figures are based on Dry Weather Flows and this could vary during wet weather conditions. AW have agreed to complete flow tests every week since the meeting with Sir Bernard Jenkin and this will be followed up as part of an agreed quarterly review. There is another review meeting due to be organised and the PC will let residents know when that is. With reference to surface water drainage a resident pointed out that at the meeting AW stated there may be some responsibility on residents to sort out the current problem of surface water going into the foul water network. These points will be picked up in the next meeting.

There is no outline planning as yet for the 9 homes on Wick Road and Park Lane that is a possible development.

### **Williamsons Developments' Outline Planning Application**

The second development in School Road was also mentioned, this covers an outline planning application from Williamsons Developments. The PC have objected to this based on the same capacity issues that relate to the Vistry Homes project plus concerns over the use of the local ditch network for surface water drainage. The Parish Council's response is posted on the CBC planning portal under planning application 220595. A resident asked how AW's response to application 220595 could state that capacity existed at the WRC to accommodate this new development. Cllr Armstrong mentioned that the PC had queried this point with AW and the statement had now been changed. AW are now accepting that there is not capacity at the WRC for the site.

### **Drainage Problems**

It was stated by a resident that following heavy rain drains in Moor Road, School Road and Wick Road cannot cope with the water. The PC are currently working with our County Cllr Lewis Barber County Highways to address drainage issues in the village. The road issue the PC are aware of and are working with Cllr Barber on this. This requires a co-ordinated approach from County Highways who are responsible for the drains and CBC who need to clear the road gutters as part of their sweeping programme. Cllr Barber stated that it is difficult to get both CBC and Highways to work together and the costs are always a problem.

A resident believed that the Vistry site build should not be continued until the planning conditions are fully met. However, the LPA have agreed a partial discharge of a key condition that allows building to commence.

The sewage from the new development in Boxted has not helped the situation as this is part of Langham WRC catchment area. Cllr Chapman stated there is a development on Dedham Road which may also be in the system. In this case if the LPA have an issue with WRC capacity the applicant will put in their own sewage disposal plant on site. The Langham PC are still getting planning application for smaller sites and always caveat their responses with the WRC problems.

### **National Grid's East Anglian Green Energy project**

A resident sent a request to discuss the National Grid's East Anglian Green Energy project. There was real concern expressed over the impact the proposed network including Pylons across Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk would have on the local community, the environment, the countryside and wildlife. The scale and environmental impact is astronomical. An enlarged map had been printed off for people to see which was quite alarming.

The resident would expect everyone to complain as much as possible about this issue. They would like other options to be considered such as alternative routes or the coastal under sea option.

Cllr Barber believes that to make the complaints constructive the best approach would be to complain about the Pylon issues first rather than the changing of the route. National Grid are following the Government guidelines and ECC are trying to include a government mandate to have other options available. The County Council is compiling a response to go to government as it is of national importance and this needs to go to the Secretary of State. There is work going ahead in getting the MPs on board, and your MP is the main person to write to and make him aware of your views.

The PC are in full support of this letter and have agreed to sign this. Cllr Chapman covers these areas under Colchester North Ward and thinks we need to work as a group and to write to MPs to show that their constituents have real concerns over this. A campaign has been set up and a

resident suggested that we all look at the Fordham response which will give you an idea for a reply. There will be a response sent from the PC within the cutoff date of 16<sup>th</sup> June.

Cllr Barber warned residents that when looking at the Grid survey be aware of questions when answering. The first questions in the online survey asks if you are in favour of green energy, if you state “yes” then you get sent to a different set of questions than if you say “no”. You can miss out the first few questions and then add in your complaint or comments. You can also get a paper copy and cross out any questions that are likely to give a false indication of your response.

A resident suggested a public meeting for Nation Grid to come to the village to talk to residents. This was thought to be unlikely as they have set up many public meetings, the next meeting is at Lawford Venture Centre on the 28<sup>th</sup> May.

Another issue that was raised was that it was not that long ago that there were lots of health reasons for not living under pylons but these seem to have been forgotten now.

The chairman explained that the Parish Council were fully engaged with this project and supported the response that had been compiled by Essex and Colchester Borough Councils. Cllr Bottwood read out the draft response which in broad terms stated:

*“National Grid’s current proposals for a new over-ground pylon route across much of its East Anglia is totally unacceptable. We fully support of the concept of North Sea wind farms to generate abundant, cheap, clean electricity. Furthermore, the recent increase in energy prices, coupled with the global insecurity of energy supplies gives added impetus to this strategy. At the recent public consultation events, National Grid confirmed that upgrades to the offshore route was a viable alternative.*

*Therefore, our strongly preferred approach is an upgrade to the offshore route. By doing so, the environmental damage, disruption and despoliation that would be caused to East Anglia by the installation of hundreds of over-ground pylons would be minimised*

*We demand that National Grid holds a full public consultation on all options, with full details and costings being made available for public scrutiny, not simply an informal consultation on their pre-selected over-ground route*

*We will continue to lobby National Grid and the Government to ensure that all necessary infrastructure is delivered in a sustainable manner. For us, this means moving the proposed new pylon route to an off-shore location.*

*We would urge all communities to have their say on National Grid’s consultation portal and sign the petition for offshore upgrades instead:*

<https://www.nationalgrid.com/electricity-transmission/network-and-infrastructure/infrastructure-projects/east-anglia-green>

<https://you.38degrees.org.uk/petitions/say-no-to-180km-of-essex-suffolk-norfolk-pylons-and-build-a-strategic-offshore-grid>”

Cllr Bottwood thanked everyone for coming and for the debate, the PC will review the questions raised.

**22/441**

**Date and time of next APM**

Proposed date Wednesday 17<sup>th</sup> May 2023 7:30pm

The Meeting closed by the Chairman at 9:00pm