

DRAFT

**Langham Parish Council minutes
at Langham Community Centre
5th July 2023 7:30pm**

Attendees: Cllr Bottwood, Cllr Thorpe, Cllr Brockman, Cllr Freeman

Present: Clerk – Carol Harbach
8 Members of the public

23/55 Welcome and apologies for absence

Cllr Bottwood welcomed everyone to the meeting.
Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Ogawa and Cllr Armstrong.
Apologies were received from Cllr Barber Essex County Council (ECC) representative and Cllr Rowe Colchester City Council (CCC) representative.

23/56 Declaration of Members interests

None arose. It was agreed that any declarations of interest would be declared as they arise on the agenda.

23/57 Agreement of Minutes of the meeting on 14th June 2023

There was a change of wording from the Planning to Highways which will be amended and then signed off. Otherwise, these were agreed as a true and accurate account of events. Proposed Cllr Freeman seconded Cllr Bottwood. All agreed.

23/58 Matters arising from the meeting on 14th June 2023

A number of responses were received after the agenda was posted but are relevant to the last meeting so the matters arising section covers more information than usual.

First matter concerns the poor mobile signal in Langham which is inhibiting residents receiving new Gigaclear services plus the issues around vulnerable people with no landline having no form of communication in an emergency. This situation could be made worse by the likelihood that BT could withdraw its landline service by 2025.

Cllr Barber has provided information since the last meeting which included Ofcom's mobile coverage checker and a recommendation that the best solution would be to use a service provided by O2 or a service that uses the O2 network such as Sky mobile, Tesco Mobile or Giffgaff. He also covered the mobile rollout plans for 4G & 5G.

Cllr Barbers report also included comments on mast applications and the problems with planning being agreed in rural locations. Also, the fact that Highways are exploring the use of Highways Street furniture (such as lamp posts – there are not many of these in Langham to use) having small cells placed on them to improve mobile connectivity. Although this is not relevant for most rural locations.

With regard to the topic concerning the withdrawal of the BT landlines, Cllr Thorpe stated that the plan is not to withdraw all landlines only the analogue service and there were questions on the mobile signal information provided to Cllr Barber but he is following this up. It was also felt that it is not a good

idea to recommend mobile providers as there is a lot of suppliers that share masts these days.

This sometimes causes congestion where you cannot get a signal on the phone and is not indicative of the quality of service offered by a particular service provider. It was also mentioned that service is still provided in a different way if a 999 call is needed.

This was discussed further and it shows that sometimes the signal does not always work in house but will work outside. The providers should be offering a backup for the signal to be used when needed.

The Digital Essex programme would be discussing this with Essex County Council but there is not information being forwarded at the moment.

There will further conversation with Cllr Barber on this in the future.

The EALC/CALC may be contacted to see what they know about this in this area. This will be on the next agenda.

The Boxted Airfield Museum letter re the exclusion of Langham residents from the event that took place. The letter has not yet been agreed and is ongoing as other information has become available.

Traffic analysis reports for Langham & Boxted. No further progress with Cllr Barber at the moment. The parishes are trying to organise a 3-parish meeting between Langham, Boxted and Dedham to cover traffic issues. Dates are being discussed.

The Oak View boundary

Oakview/Recreation Ground boundary issues relating to drainage and potential flooding matters. Cllr Barber was going to send pictures taken by Essex Highways at the manhole on School Road adjacent to the west end of the Recreation Ground. Ongoing, PC need to chase this up.

Kerb stones project. Information received from Cllr Barber that this work is planned to start 5th July.

VAS sign on Park Lane. County Highways have stated that the failure is due to a damaged solar panel and a new one needs to be ordered. The PC have responded to this saying that the damage was caused by vandalism when it was first installed and as this did not affect the functionality it was never reported. The new battery would still be required in any case as this has not been replaced in 15 years. No further update from Essex Highways in the last 2 weeks on the new battery and solar panel. Ongoing

Agrimix change of use – Cllr Barber has conveyed the following response from the Essex enforcement team:

“Following a site meeting, the County Planning Authority (CPA) considered a breach of planning control had occurred. The operator has indicated they intend to submit a planning application in an attempt to regularise the unauthorised waste recycling operation namely waste road material, involving the storage, deposition and treatment of waste.

In context of the above the CPA are currently content to withhold formal enforcement action and enable them this opportunity, subject to an application being submitted within a timely manner. Without prejudice, while an application may be made in an attempt to regularise the identified breach

of planning control, there is no guarantee any such application would be deemed acceptable or granted.

The CPA have recently received contact from a Planning Agent acting on behalf of the operator, who have indicated an application is forthcoming”.

A resident stated that if a change of use application is registered, they will be objecting to it as they are still bothered by the smoke from the regular fires that are had at the site.

This was discussed further and agreed that information on any change of use application that is notified to the Parish Council will be passed on to the resident when it appears on the portal.

The overhanging verge enquiry in Wick Road opposite Petreda. This was inspected and most of the offending hedgerow at “The Wick” had been removed and the property now has now a new fence. Nothing was found opposite Petreda.

This is now discharged

Missing 30mph sign on Greyhound Hill - The site has been inspected and has been reported on the Highways portal with reference number 3632864. This has been looked at by Highways and informed that this will not be a high priority.

Collapsed ditch outside The Oaks – it has been looked at and it is not very different from other areas in the village. Discharged.

Other items are on this agenda.

23/59

Public Open Forum (Maximum 15 minutes)

Questions may be noted and answered at the next meeting.

A resident spoke about Pond corner the Shepherd and Dog corner which are being looked after by the PC even though this is not their land. Birchwood Road to the Langham boundary sign is looking a bit untidy on the south side and should be cut by Highways as it is their land. Also, the trees on the land owned by Highways in that area are also over grown and also need to be cut back. Highways needs to be contacted to resolve these issues. This will be reported by the PC.

A resident had an idea of asking the refugees from the Holiday Inn Hotel to help with work which may be needed around the village. There is a meeting being arranged by the PC to meet with CCC to see what we can do to integrate the refugees into village activities. This is ongoing and there have been social events with this group already undertaken.

A resident raised a question regarding a footpath from Langham Lodge to airfield - footpath 47. This was supposed to be reinstated but hasn't been. Unfortunately, the footpath councillor is not here tonight but this will be followed up. The landowner is responsible for this even if the land is farmed used by a third party. This will be followed up at the next meeting. Ongoing

A resident also reported that the car transporters going up Lodge Lane are back and damaging trees. The enforcement officer will be contacted to inform him of this if we can determine where the cars are being stored.

23/60

Visitors Reports (CCC and County Councillors)

No councillors are present to report.

23/61

Finance

61.1 No matters arising from previous Finance Committee meetings. The last Finance Committee meeting was 3rd May 2023

61.2 To approve payments in accordance with the 2023/24 budget

Clerk Salary for June	£904.26
HMRC NI Payment	48.12
Village contractor Invoice 06/23	126.00
James Todd & Co payroll supplier	26.40
Langham Community Centre hire for June 23	64.50
RCCE subscription	72.60
	=====
	Total £1,241.88

Balance as at 30/6/23

Community Account 30553093	£ 44,983.40
Savings account 30553085	113.79
Tennis account 50634468	14,996.22
Bonfire account 40553182	2.52
	=====
Total	£ 60,095.93

Current account June 23

Income	£ 111,348.18
Expenditure	£ 80,411.27

Proposed Cllr Thorpe seconded Cllr Freeman Payments to be made by Cllr Brockman and seconded authorised by Cllr Bottwood.

The Internal Audit has been completed and come back with no recommendations to the council. These papers have now been passed on to PKF Littlejohn, the external auditor for them to undertake their process. It was agreed by the council to have Heelis & Lodge – next year as the internal auditor. Proposed Cllr Thorpe and seconded Cllr Freeman all agreed.

61.3 Agree to LPC placing orders on behalf of LCC for projects relating to s106 Community Facilities funding

Colchester City Council (CCC) has agreed to LPC to managing the process for the S106 Community Facilities funding for Langham projects. With regard to the Langham Community Centre S106 funding from CCC it is proposed that the LPC hold the funds in a separate account to pay for items that qualify for this funding and also the VAT refunds can be claimed and put back into this account. This would be for S106 project money only not for any other purchases.

The rationale and VAT gain was explained to the meeting.

The agreed proposed process for administration of s106 Community Facilities funding between CCC, PC and Langham Community Centre (LCC):

- LPC collects the quotes from LCC and submits the quotes to CCC
- CCC sign off the conditions of grant payment release form and forward to LPC for signature
- LPC sign and return the form to CCC which triggers release of the funds on submission of an invoice to CCC by LPC. Funds are paid into a nominated LPC account used only for this purpose
- LPC orders the goods for delivery to LCC
- Once notified that the expected goods are received by LCC, LPC settles the invoice and gifts the items to LCC
- LPC claim back the VAT and the money is returned to the same nominated account. It can then be used for other LCC projects that qualify for s106 Community Facilities funding
- LCC maintains records of the grant payment for seven years and is responsible for compliance of any marketing activity associated with the project.

The Clerk has contacted the VAT office and the reclaim has been confirmed and clarified by the VAT office if the orders, invoices and reclaim of VAT will be undertaken by LPC and then projects are “gifted” to the LCC.

The Clerk has also checked with the internal auditor who is happy with this process as it will be transparent and in a separate bank account so that payments and receipts can be audited. Proposed Cllr Thorpe seconded Cllr Freeman All agreed.

23/62

Planning/Housing

62.1 Planning Applications Decisions Received

231059 Bramley House, Wick Road, Langham, Essex, CO4 5PG Amended roof design to garage matching parent building, previous planning reference number 221981 decided on 11/10/2022. Approved conditional.

62.2 Planning Applications Received

231063 7 Langham Place, Colchester CO4 9GB

Proposed rear single storey extension providing kitchen/dining area and study.

Although the council were notified of this application it is not in Langham.

An additional decision has been received since the agenda was published and will appear on the next agenda. However, it was mentioned at the meeting as this is planning application 220595, Williamsons Developments' application for 30 new homes in School Road. This was Approved conditionally with 29 conditions. Two of these conditions are:

the LPA will not sign this off (above slab level) until it can be confirmed by the developer with information supplied by AW and the EA that adequate sewage capacity exists (Condition 18). It also states that occupancy cannot occur until a detailed wastewater strategy has been supplied and agreed by the LPA. Condition (17).

The planning committee will meet as soon as possible to discuss this application.

This will put it on the next agenda. Any comment will come from the next planning committee meeting and we will not minute comments at this point.

62.3 s106 Funding update

S106 Grant applications have been signed off by CCC for two Community Facilities projects, a Stairlift to the committee room and acoustic panels in the main hall totaling £17,820. CCC are now awaiting invoices.

We are still awaiting payment from the Parks & Leisure enabling officer for the tennis club benches. Several reminders have been sent.

23/63

Recreation Ground Committee updates

Bonfire Night

Cllr Thorpe reported that this year's bonfire is progressing well and Cllr Ogawa has organised a large part of this and was thanked for her efforts to date. There are regular bonfire night meetings being held to keep this event on track. Most of the main bookings have been made and confirmed.

Volunteers are still needed from the village for this event to happen. The car parking is being looked at again and, in more detail, and we are waiting for confirmation of whether we can use the Car park at The Oaks.

The refugees may wish to help us with this event and this is part of the conversations that are going on. There may be help from the Boxted runners for them having their event for free and use of the field for their events for a return of volunteers for the night. John Palmer has offered to help and sponsor the banners and boards. The last years sponsors will be spoken to see if they will be willing to sponsor the event again this year. Ongoing

Football Club bookings

There are 3 clubs that can use the football pitch at the weekends and for training nights on a Tuesday and Wednesday evening.

We can actually accommodate all the clubs that have contacted us over the past weeks. Hire of the car park and changing rooms/toilets etc. will need to go through the LCC. The clubs will probably stop training around September because of the lack of light in the evening. Roll away goals will be considered in the future for use by the teams and S106 funding has been earmarked to fund this. Using portable goals would also mean that training on the pitch could be undertaken at different locations thus protecting the pitch. It was agreed that funding for this does not need a vote from a financial point of view as this is on a S106 project list that has been approved by CCC.

Children's Play area

There is still some work to complete with the grass area and the "inclusive" roundabout is being looked at again by the suppliers as it kept sticking when used.

A meeting has been requested by the PC with the contractor and this will happen shortly.

There will be an official opening soon to also coincide with the anniversary of the recreation field opening.

The bins have been discussed by the recreation ground committee and it has been suggested to ask for a quote from the LCC to see if we can pay per bag for the full bags to be added to their bin in the car park (at £2.50 per bag) as

the Pre School and Shop already do. The cost of this would be around £3000 a year with the contractor's hours being added into this. This may make it easier to keep this area cleaner but we will need a volunteer to replace the bin bags on a weekly or as needed basis.

It was suggested to look at a compactor bin from CCC which has software in it which informs the council when it needs to be emptied. The cost of this is around £5000 for a 5-year license. This was discussed by the council and thought to be a good idea. The size is approximately 900 x 900 cm and this will need to be on a hard standing. A slab can be purchased from a building supplier for this to stand on. It would need to be investigated whether S106 project money could be set aside for this.

Multi-Use sports court

This is on hold at the moment as the Recreation Ground committee are awaiting a check on the results of the cricket ball striking survey, in case additional safety fencing is needed in this area. This may affect the specification for the Multi-Use sports court.

Cricket facilities at Langham

Various conversations and checks of the areas. A field layout diagram has been produced by Labosport and the ball striking analysis is now being done. The feasibility study can commence if the results are positive and agreed by the RG committee following further discussions.

23/64

Councillor vacancies

An advert for another councillor for the council will be put up shortly and posted on the website. Any interest in this position please contact the Clerk. Cllr Brockman will add something to Langham Locals.

23/65

Portable Speed Indicator Device in Wick Road update

A shallow socket design has been requested and is still being awaited from Hatton who will complete the excavation work. They have asked the supplier NAL(the socket provider) for the information needed.

23/66

Anglian Water (AW) Update

Grant Tuffs from AW had sent a report that was read out:

The Dry Weather Flow (DWF) scheme for Langham has now passed the first delivery milestone. The solution being progressed is based on the pre-application to the EA for an increased DWF permit of 540m³/d as compared to the current 420m³/d.

In order to meet the new compliance parameters, it is likely that the water recycling centre (WRC) will require substantial work, so it will be a significant and time-consuming project to complete. There will now be a period of further optioneering and detailed design with the next delivery milestone planned for early November 2023. Currently the projected completion date is the end of March 2025, however, it is accepted that this may be challenging due to the scale of the construction works likely to be required.

In terms of planning AW now have a bespoke response to planning applications within the Langham WRC catchment.

"In consultation with the Environment Agency we have a written committed investment plan for Langham WRC. In October 2021 we applied to the Environment Agency for an increased dry weather flow allowance from 420

m3/d to 540m3/d and we are scheduling an upgrade to Langham WRC in our program of works. Upgrades to Langham WRC are expected to be complete by 2025 at the latest”.

23/67

Councillor’s Reports

No decisions are made or action points allocated in this section

Cllr Thorpe – telecoms - there is a meeting being set up to discuss this shortly.

Cllr Freeman – The refugees - Cllr Freeman is happy to get involved with any of the project that may be necessary. Cllr Ogawa is also in contact with them.

Cllr Brockman – nothing further

Cllr Bottwood – nothing further

23/68

Clerk’s Report and Correspondence

The Local Highway Panel have notified us of a feasibility study they are undertaking at a cost of £20,000 with Digigo which is a fully electric shared public transport service – which is a min bus – which offers an on-demand or pre-bookable travel in parts of Essex.

Colchester City Council has opened a public consultation on the new masterplan for St Botolph’s circus. Details of this will be put on the website.

National Grid are running a public consultation drop-in event at the LCC on the 13th July and the anti-pylon group have requested that leaflets opposing the pylons scheme are given out at the entry to this event.

The council will not be handing these out on the day.

The leaflets mentioned above have been printed by the Pylons East Anglian lobbying team and an email was received from them asking if the PC would help distribute these in Langham. The leaflets contain a section that can be returned to the Secretary of State opposing the scheme in favour of the offshore option. The PC are supporting this initiative so 480 copies will be requested for distribution in the village. This was agreed.

Andrew Stacey to deliver Moor Road end of Park Lane, Moor Road, Chapel Road & High Street. Cllr Brockman to deliver Park Lane & Wick Road. Cllr Freeman to deliver School Road & Perry Lane.

23/69

Training/Events

None at the moment and training requirements are to go to the Clerk.

23/70

Items for the next agenda

Above and any other items to be sent to the Clerk

Telecom in the village.

Items above

23/71

To confirm dates of next meeting

No meeting in August.

Next Meeting Wednesday 6th September 7:30pm.

23/72

Chairmans closure of meeting

The meeting was closed at 9:30 pm

Signed

Clr Bottwood

Date