



**Parish of Castle Heddingham**  
**Claire Waters (Parish Clerk)**  
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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF CASTLE HEDDINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL,  
HELD ON MONDAY 12<sup>th</sup> FEBRUARY 2024, 7.30PM AT CASTLE HEDDINGHAM CLUB**

**Present:** Cllrs Allen, Deeks, Doe, Dover, Foulkes, Mowle, Southgate, Westrop  
**In the Chair:** Cllr Southgate  
**Clerk:** Claire Waters  
**Also present:** None

**1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Cllr Smith apologised for absence.

**2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING**

The minutes of the meeting of Monday 8th January 2024 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

**Proposed:** Cllr Allen

**Seconded:** Cllr Foulkes

Agreed unanimously

**3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Cllr Allen declared an interest in planning application 24/00220/FUL & 24/00221/LBC in her role as postmistress as the Post Office was a previous tenant of the property. Cllr Doe also declared an interest in planning application 24/00220/FUL & 24/00221/LBC as landlady of the Bell Inn, who agreed a financial arrangement regarding refuse storage for a previous application which has since been withdrawn. Cllr Foulkes also wished it to be noted that she is a neighbour of the property.

**4. PUBLIC FORUM**

None

**5. PROGRESS CHECK**

Village maintenance issues and update on actions from last meeting. The clerk gave a brief update:

**5.1. Essex Best Kept Playing Field 2024:** To approve entry for 2024 at £10 entry fee per class (2-3 entries). [https://www.essexplayingfields.org/page\\_2583315.html](https://www.essexplayingfields.org/page_2583315.html)

**Action:** It was agreed that entries to two or three categories should be submitted. It was also noted that more play sand will be ordered to fill up the sandpit in March/April 2024

**5.2. Essex Village of the Year 2024:** To consider possible entry for the 2024 competition run by RCCE

**Action:** This was agreed in principle, the clerk will forward more details to Councillors once the 2024 competition is formally launched.

**5.3. Sanitary waste in street bins:** It was reported by Village Maintenance that used incontinence products had been disposed of in street bins at Bayley Street, St James Street and Lucas Lane. **Action:** A notice will be placed on the bins

**5.4. Glass bottles discarded Sheepcot Road:** Village maintenance are finding regular discarded empty 1litre spirit bottles dumped along Sheepcot Road grass verge. Sunlight reflecting off glass is one of the common causes of wildfire – residents are reminded please to dispose of their glass bottles safely. A post has been published on the village Facebook group to remind residents of this.

**5.5. Task & Finish Volunteer Group:** It was discussed whether a group of volunteers might be established who could come together on occasions to carry out specific outdoor tasks, e.g. footpath clearance, churchyard tidying. **Action:** The clerk will look at Terms of Reference for groups of this type. Agenda item for March meeting.

**6. HIGHWAYS & PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY**

Update on Highways & Footpath issues and any new problems to report

**6.1. Footpath 25 Scotch Pasture ROW 3316971:** Planning Inspectorate inquiry to be held at 10.00am on Tuesday 5th March 2024, at Gosfield Village Hall (Maurice Rowson Hall), Church Road, Gosfield, Essex

CO9 1TL. **Action:** The clerk will confirm attendees from the Parish Council to the Public Inquiry and confirm whether our County Councillor will be attending.

**6.2. Luces Lane:** Restricted pedestrian access due to a parked car has continued on a regular basis.

**Action:** The clerk will write a letter to the property concerned, requesting that access is kept clear.

**6.3. Essex Highways communication:** The issue of advance notice of Highways work was raised, this takes up clerk time in making residents aware of planned work and is a waste of time when publicised planned work subsequently does not happen. Some work also takes place without the clerk or residents being notified, e.g. the resurfacing of Luces Lane last month. **Action:** Clerk to raise with Cllr Schwier the communication systems in place to inform Parish Councils about planned work by Essex Highways.

## 7. REPORTS

**7.1. Police/PCSO/Neighbourhood Watch.** Monthly police reports and Neighbourhood Watch weekly newsletters are published on the website [www.castlehedingham.org/community/neighbourhood-watch/](http://www.castlehedingham.org/community/neighbourhood-watch/)

**7.2. Essex CC report – Cllr Schwier** apologised for absence and referred Councillors to his email updates. Where these are relevant to residents, ECC updates are posted on the Latest News section of the Castle Hedingham Parish Council website: <https://castlehedingham.org/latest-news/>.

**7.3. Braintree DC reports – Cllrs Beavis and Taylor BDC** apologised for absence

## 8. PLANNING

*Applications received:*

**24/00232/TPOCON** Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: Holly (T1) - Remove tree to a stump Sycamore (T2) - Remove tree to a stump  
Castle Hedingham Tennis Club St James Street CO9 3EW *No objection on condition a valid reason is given for removal of the Holly.*

**24/00220/FUL & 24/00221/LBC** Proposed conversion of existing building into 2 holiday lets with commercial area

Buckleys And The Magnolia Tea Rooms 7A St James Street CO9 3EJ *Objection: BDC Adopted Local Plan, Policy LPP61 not met. Commercial viability not tested, poor accessibility of first floor space, reduced availability of ground floor commercial space.*

*Applications determined*

**23/02752/LBC & 23/02751/FUL** Proposed conversion of existing building into 3 holiday lets  
Buckleys And The Magnolia Tea Rooms 7A St James St CO9 3EJ *Application WITHDRAWN*

**23/02843/TPOCON** Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: London Plane (T1) Crown reduction of 4m to previous cuts. Poplar (T2) Pollard to 10m, Poplar (T3) Pollard to 8m in height.  
Binghams Pottery Lane CO9 3EU *Application PERMITTED*

**23/02852/TPOCON** Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: T1 - Lime Trees x8 - Re-pollard. T2 - Yew Tree - Reduce by 2m T3 - Yew Tree - reduce by approx. 2m. T4 - Yew Tree - reduce height by 4m and sides by 2m. T5 - Silver Birch - reduce by 2-3m. T6 - Goat Willow - approx. 4-5m off  
The Vicarage Queen Street CO9 3EZ *Application PERMITTED*

**23/02880/TPOCON** Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area:- T1 1 x Cherry reduce by 0.5-1m T2 1 x Portuguese laurel reduce away from building by 1m  
Goston Mount Pottery Lane CO9 3EU *Application PERMITTED*

**23/02943/TPOCON** Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: False Acacia - Prune the overhanging branches. To be cut back by up to 2 metres  
High House 2 St James Street CO9 3EJ *Application PERMITTED*

## 9. FINANCE

**9.1.** The monthly payments were approved for authorisation by two Councillors. The monthly bank reconciliation was checked and signed by Cllr Deeks – see *Appendix 1: Financial Report*

**Proposed:** Cllr Doe **Seconded:** Cllr Foulkes **Agreed unanimously**

## 10. PUBLIC TOILETS

To consider and agree repair work needed at Public Toilets: 1. Replace damaged baby change door, 2. Replace rotted maintenance cupboard door, 3. Replace sink wastes.

**Action:** Clerk to obtain quotes for replacement of both doors. Replacement of sink wastes and self-stopping taps to be considered for future.

## 11. COMMUNITY ALLOTMENT

**11.1.** The minutes of a meeting of the Village Park group & Community Allotment leaders on Friday 26<sup>th</sup> January 2024 were noted. These included an update on plans, communication to residents and grant fund reporting to BDC.

**11.2.** A generous offer of a donation from Castle Hedingham Parochial Charities of £1,000 towards raising the height of 4 raised beds to enable easier access was noted, with grateful thanks to the charity trustees.

**11.3.** An offer from a resident of a second-hand petrol driven brushcutter/trimmer as a gift to the Parish Council was also noted, with grateful thanks.

## 12. CASTLE HEDINGHAM CLUB & VILLAGE HALL

**12.1.** A report of a meeting with Social Club & Village Hall committee members on Wednesday 10<sup>th</sup> January 2024 was noted. The aim of the meeting was to consider ways the two organisations could work better together. Parish Council involvement in a Summer Fete for the village was considered.

**Action:** To confirm the Parish Council is happy to support the Hall and Club Committees, offering use of the Village Park and help with publicity, but is unable to commit financial resources or clerk time to organising a large event.

**12.2.** To decide on actions to be taken to address damp at front and rear flat roof of Social Club

**Action:** The clerk will obtain 3 quotes for building repair.

**12.3.** Receipt of the Village Hall financial report January 2024 was noted, with thanks

## 13. WETHERSFIELD AIRFIELD – ASYLUM CENTRE & PRISON PROPOSALS

**13.1.** Minutes of a WASC meeting on 29<sup>th</sup> January attended by Cllr Foulkes had been received, with particular concerns raised about the traffic from normal daily commuting by staff if the mega-prisons proposals went ahead. Projections show increased staff/visitor traffic through Castle Hedingham at peak hours. Cllr Doe reported from a Home Office asylum centre meeting at Wethersfield on 12<sup>th</sup> February, when it had been mentioned that the mega-prisons proposals for Wethersfield would no longer proceed as two alternative sites had planning approved. This should be fully confirmed by 1<sup>st</sup> March 2024. The asylum centre is anticipated to be there for a maximum of 3 years from April 2024 to April 2027. A new senior responsible officer is in charge of the centre and is limiting the intake of asylum seekers to 800, with no more than 200 at each new intake, to ensure that the infrastructure can support the number of people.

**13.2.** WASC supporting documents including a prisons traffic impact report for the local area had been received.

**Action:** Clerk to confirm the latest updates on the prisons and asylum centre plans as there appears to be conflicting information

## 14. 20'S PLENTY FOR ESSEX

A report and recommendations from a meeting with 20s Plenty organisation attended by the clerk on Tuesday 23<sup>rd</sup> January were noted. See <https://www.20splenty.org/>

**Action:** to consider ways of assessing public opinion in Castle Hedingham. To continue to liaise with De Vere Primary School. To cost out options for publicity material including stickers and posters. Next 20s Plenty for Essex meeting via Zoom on Tuesday 27<sup>th</sup> February at 7.30pm.

**15. CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE** – Resident enquiries had been received about parking at the bus stop by the Bell causing difficulty for passenger accessibility when boarding the bus. A resident had also asked about improved safety crossing the road at St James Street in the same location

## 16. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

- **Volunteer Task & Finish group:** To agree plans and terms of reference
- **Annual Parish Assembly** will be held on Monday 20<sup>th</sup> May in the Village Hall.

**17. NEXT MEETINGS:**

<b>Monday 11th March 2024</b>	<b>7.30pm</b>	<b>Ordinary Parish Council</b>	<b>Castle Hedingham Club</b>
<b>Monday 8th April 2024</b>	<b>7.30pm</b>	<b>Ordinary Parish Council</b>	<b>Castle Hedingham Club</b>
<b>Monday 13th May 2024</b>	<b>7.30pm</b>	<b>Annual Parish Council</b>	<b>Castle Hedingham Club</b>
<b>Monday 20th May 2024</b>	<b>7.30pm</b>	<b>Annual Parish Assembly</b>	<b>Village Hall</b>

The meeting closed at 9.12pm

SIGNED (CHAIRMAN)

DATE

**Appendix 1: Financial Report****PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS FOR AUTHORISATION FEBRUARY 2024**

<b>Feb-24</b>	<b>Payments in Month</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Amount</b>
	Npower	Electricity Street lights	£0.00
DD	Octopus Energy	Electricity Toilets	£18.68
DD	Invoco (GOCARDLESS)	Portable telephone number	£1.32
DD	Peoples Partnership	Peoples Pension	TBC
B/P	E C Waters	Home as Office	£75.00
B/P	E C Waters	Office Expenses Jan 8th - Feb 12th	£30.22
B/P	CH Club	Jan & Feb meetings	£40.00
B/P	Staff	Salaries	TBC
B/P	Darkins	Village Maintenance	£32.00
B/P	BDC	Building insurance Pump House	£14.28
B/P	Rentokil Initial	Sanitary disposal	£16.55
B/P	E C Waters	Community Allotment gazebo	£149.99
B/P	E C Waters	Community Allotment table	£119.70
<b>TOTAL in month</b>			<b>£497.74</b>

<b>Feb-24</b>	<b>Receipts in Month</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Amount</b>
	None		
<b>TOTAL in month</b>			<b>£0.00</b>

**Accounts balances at 12th February 2024**

		<b>Interest 2023-24</b>
Unity Trust Current account	£16,342.73	N/A
Unity Trust Deposit account	£10,787.56	£206.57
Cambridge & Counties 95 day	£36,075.53	£810.75
<b>TOTAL RESERVES</b>	<b>£63,205.82</b>	

Of which:

Historic Village Centre infrastructure reserve	£18,370.40
Community Projects reserve	£8,500.00
Public Toilet reserve	£5,000.00
Community Allotment grant BDC	£4,547.17
<b>GENERAL RESERVE (50% of precept is advised)</b>	<b>£26,788.25</b>

S106 funding remaining at BDC (until 31.5.2030) £2,623.21

## RECONCILED PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS JANUARY 2024

Jan-24	Payments in Month	Details	Amount
	Npower	Electricity Street lights	£0.00
DD	Octopus Energy	Electricity Toilets	£4.05
DD	Invoco (GOCARDLESS)	Portable telephone number	£1.32
DD	Peoples Partnership	Peoples Pension	£0.00
B/P	E C Waters	Home as Office	£75.00
B/P	E C Waters	Office Expenses Dec 15th - Jan 8th	£17.82
B/P	Staff	Salaries	£1,733.05
B/P	HMRC	Tax/NI December month 9	£209.22
B/P	Tony Devenish	Gents toilet lock	£12.19
B/P	Darkins	Village Maintenance	£27.59
B/P	EALC	New Cllr Days 1&2 SM	£228.00
B/P	Janitorial Direct	Toilet supplies & WM brush	£172.95
B/P	Viking Direct	Printer paper	£26.89
<b>TOTAL in month</b>			<b>£2,508.08</b>

Jan-24	Receipts in Month	Details	Amount
15-Jan	UKPN	Wayleave Nunnery Street	£10.33
<b>TOTAL in month</b>			<b>£10.33</b>