



Parish of Castle Heddingham  
Claire Waters (Parish Clerk)  
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**MINUTES OF A MEETING OF CASTLE HEDDINGHAM PARISH COUNCIL,  
HELD ON MONDAY 13<sup>th</sup> NOVEMBER 2023, 7.30PM AT CASTLE HEDDINGHAM CLUB**

**Present:** Cllrs Deeks, Doe, Dover, Foulkes, Westrop.  
**In the Chair:** Cllr Doe  
**Clerk:** Claire Waters  
**Also present:** Cllr P Schwier ECC (between items 8 & 9)  
Cllr J Beavis BDC and Cllr W Taylor BDC (between items 10 & 11)  
4 members of the public (2 to item 6, 2 to item 7)

### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Cllrs Allen, Mowle, Smith & Southgate

**1.1. RESOLVED:** Cllr Doe was elected to chair the meeting

**Proposed:** Cllr Dover                                      **Seconded:** Cllr Deeks                                      Agreed unanimously

### 2. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the meeting of Monday 9th October 2023 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman

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

### 3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Cllr Westrop declared an interest in the Planning Appeal at item 8 as a near neighbour of the site. Councillor interests in item 6.1 Footpath 25 public inquiry were considered but would not be a disclosable pecuniary interest and no decision was to be taken at the meeting.

### 4. PUBLIC FORUM

2 members of the public attended to express concerns about the diversion of Footpath 25 at item 6.1. One outlined their reasons for objecting to the proposal, which include a less accessible route alongside overgrown brambles and trees on neighbouring land, as well as the loss of the view. With permission of the Chair, item 6.1 was brought forward and discussed during the public forum. The members of the public then left the meeting after item 6.

2 parishioners attended to inform the Parish Council about plans for a Youth Club at item 11. With permission of the Chair, this item was brought forward and discussed before item 7. The parishioners then left the meeting.

### 5. PROGRESS CHECK

Village maintenance issues and update on actions from last meeting. The clerk reported briefly on the successful appointment of our new Village Maintenance operative and Public Toilets operative during their first month of employment.

### 6. HIGHWAYS & PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

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

**6.1. Footpath 25 Scotch Pasture:** 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. The Gosfield venue has been selected because it meets the all but one of the accessibility criteria for public inquiries, whereas the Memorial Hall does not meet a number of them. It is confirmed by Essex Public Rights of Way that all the documents for the public inquiry will be available on a publicly accessible website in the near future, and residents are asked not to request paper copies from Essex Public Rights of Way unless absolutely necessary as this increases their already busy workload preparing for the inquiry. A landowner is entitled to divert a footpath if they have a legitimate reason for doing so. Objections to a diversion will only be considered if they meet with the provisions of the **Highways Act 1980, s119**

**Action:** Clerk to chase the publication of the documentation pack online and check deadlines for registering to attend and speak. *Agenda item for January meeting*

**Action:** To raise this with District and County Councillors and seek other sources of advice and support to ensure the parish is properly represented.

**6.2. Footpath 38 New Park to Sheepcot Rd:** A resident complaint was noted and a number of actions taken by Village Maintenance to clear the footpath. Some property owners bordering the footpath had responded positively to a letter from the Parish Council requesting they attend to vegetation at their boundary. The resident had been directed Essex Public Rights of Way <https://www.essexhighways.org/tell-us/public-rights-of-way-issues> to report any remaining overhanging trees from privately owned property

**6.3. Footpath 19 & Delvyns Lane verge:** Footpath 19 missing waymarker signs will be replaced by Village Maintenance, although this section of the footpath is in Gestingthorpe Parish. The special verge at Delvyns Lane has now been cut by BDC verge cutting contractors and will be raked as soon as possible by Village Maintenance to allow the rare flower species to grow in spring.

**6.4. Station Rd verge:** BDC appointed new verge cutting contractors in 2022. Following correspondence with BDC and the contractors, they have now cut the verge at Station Road. The Parish Council is grateful for their co-operation. Village Maintenance is in the process of clearing the side growth on the footpath.

## 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 ECC arrived and reported after item 8. He then left the meeting**

- **ECC updates:** These are emailed regularly to the clerk. Those relevant to Castle Hedingham residents are now shared on the new Latest News page on the Parish Council website <https://castlehedingham.org/latest-news/>. Castle Hedingham residents are encouraged to request membership of the website and opt in for weekly email updates on new content that has been added.
- **Highways:** Drain jetting crews have been working ad hoc to clear drains following heavy rain
- **Sandbags:** These are not supplied by ECC, householders needing a supply should contact the Environment Agency. ECC provides funding help for residents with flooding concerns, call Essex County Council general enquiries on 0345 743 0430 Monday to Friday, 8:30am to 5:00pm or use the general enquiries online form at <https://www.essex.gov.uk/general-enquiries>
- **Winter operations:** pothole repair work is not effective when carried out in freezing conditions. Crews are redeployed on winter gritting and there are now 49 gritters, with 2 smaller electric ones for accessing narrower rural roads. 40% of highways are covered, spreading around 21,000 tonnes of grit. The electric gritters are unlikely to cover Castle Hedingham and bus routes are the main priority
- **Police, Fire & Crime:** The commissioner has a current consultation on increasing the budget, see <https://castlehedingham.org/latest-news/> for details
- **ECC Consultations:** Draft Waste Partnership consultation ends on 22<sup>nd</sup> November, and the Vehicle Booking for recycling centres consultation ends on 19<sup>th</sup> November
- **Highway repairs in Castle Hedingham:** The recent overnight repairs through the village which took place outside the scheduled dates were raised by Cllr Doe.
- **Crime in Castle Hedingham:** Following recent increases in local crime, Cllr Schwier offered to contact Roger Hirst, PFCC to request his attendance at a meeting. The clerk reported recent contact with local PC James Draper who has also offered to attend a meeting.

**7.3. Braintree DC reports – Cllrs Beavis and Taylor BDC arrived and reported after item 10. They then left the meeting.**

- **Hedinghams Parish Magazine:** Cllrs Beavis and Taylor are strong supporters of the magazine being free and delivered to all households in the Hedinghams. Sible Hedingham PC is taking over responsibility, supporting the current editor and subsidising the cost in the early stages until it becomes self-financing through advertising. There are no longer-term financial commitments planned for either Parish Council. The re-launch is planned for March 2024, with plans for a 50:50 advertising to editorial mix and a maximum of 52 pages. The copy deadline for submissions will be 15<sup>th</sup> of the previous month which will enable the latest Parish Council minutes to be included.

- **Planning:** Cllr Beavis confirmed she is aware of the latest planning appeals and has been contacted by residents about Rosemary Lane and Footpath 25 at Scotch Pastures. Cllr Beavis will be attending the Footpath 25 Public Inquiry in March
- **BDC Budget:** The Independent and Green group at BDC is still challenging green bin charges and pushing for free bins for people with assisted collections.
- **BDC 4-year Corporate Strategy:** Consultation feedback shows rural deprivation, crime and open spaces are seen as a priority by residents, as well as congestion in Braintree. Cllrs Beavis and Taylor have asked the CEO and Neil Jones of BDC to visit Heddingham ward to see the issues for themselves, including reviewing Heddinghams Medical Centre progress and the Riverside Walk.
- **Wethersfield Airfield:** Cllr Taylor had attended a Home Office follow up meeting via video conference. It had been a short meeting due to the news of MP James Cleverly being appointed Home Secretary. Monthly meetings are scheduled to follow up a visit to the asylum centre. Cllrs Southgate, Foulkes and Doe are representing Castle Heddingham Parish Council on this issue.
- **Parish Council meeting times:** A time change for both Parish Councils is being considered, with Sible Heddingham starting earlier and Castle Heddingham slightly later so that Cllrs Beavis and Taylor can attend both.

## 8. PLANNING

### *Applications received:*

**23/02552/HH** Erection of single storey rear extension  
27 Nunnery Street CO9 3DN

*No objections*

### *Planning appeal:*

**APP/Z1510/W/23/3321252** Retrospective change of use from agricultural to commercial B2 use for the purposes of vintage vehicle and vintage agricultural machinery repairs and workshop

Workshop on Land South of Rosemary Farm, Rosemary Lane      *Objections as for original application*

### *Applications determined*

**23/02478/AGR** Erection of New machinery store adjoining existing agricultural building: Submission of details following Prior Approval Required (23/02215/AGR)

Rushley Green Farm Rushley Green CO9 3AH

*Prior Approval Given*

**23/01983/LBC** Re paint exterior of property including front door and side gates, leaving all beams exposed

Blue Boar House 24 St James Street CO9 3EW

*Application PERMITTED*

**23/02431/TPOCON** Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: Removal of Walnut tree as it is growing through the building

4 Falcon Square CO9 3BT

*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

**9.2. Budget 2024-25:** the 2023-24 budget progress and a forecast of the end of financial year status was reviewed in preparation for the January budget meeting, with the impact of the recent Local Government pay award (item 12) considered. Cost savings continue to be sought wherever possible.

## 10. COMMUNITY ALLOTMENT

**10.1.** A successful £3,500 Community Gardens and Open Spaces grant application was noted, with thanks to Braintree District Council for this grant from the Levelling Up fund. A grant agreement was signed by Cllr Will Dover and the clerk.

**10.2.** In line with the terms of the grant agreement, initial spending on the items specified in the application was approved. This includes further raised beds at the allotment, equipment for developing a Community Orchard area and £500 for marketing to encourage more Castle Heddingham residents to participate.

**10.3.** Further actions to increase participation in the Community Allotment project were considered, including leaflets delivered to households and possible events at the Village Park.

**10.4.** A meeting date with the Village Park group was proposed for Tuesday 28<sup>th</sup> November, 3pm at Castle Hedingham Club. **Action:** The clerk will check availability of the venue and all attendees.

#### **11. PROPOSAL - YOUTH CLUB - CASTLE HEDINGHAM**

A proposal for a weekly Youth Club to be held at Castle Hedingham Club had been presented to the Parish Council. Two amendments had been added, including a change to the proposed meeting day following feedback from families. The two organisers who attended the meeting (*see Public Forum item 4*) were thanked for their thorough proposal and their efforts in meeting a need for younger village residents. The booking of the venue is a matter for the organisers and Castle Hedingham Club, but the Parish Council is generally in support of this initiative. The potential use of the outdoor space is Parish Council responsibility and can be considered further as the Youth Club develops, but in principle the Village Park is for everyone and young people are encouraged to use it and enjoy it. Organised events e.g. BBQs may need additional risk assessment and details should be submitted to the clerk for each event for Parish Council consideration.

#### **12. PAY REVIEW 2023-2024**

**12.1. RESOLVED** To hold this item in closed session due to confidential staff matters

**Proposed:** Cllr Deeks **Seconded:** Cllr Westrop **Agreed** unanimously

**12.2. RESOLVED** Village Maintenance & Public Toilets staff: the delayed pay review for 2023-2024 was approved in line with the NJC Local Government pay scales published in early November

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

*The clerk left the meeting*

**RESOLVED** Parish Clerk & Responsible Financial Officer: the delayed pay review for 2023-2024 was approved in line with the NJC Local Government pay scales published in early November

**Proposed:** Cllr Deeks **Seconded:** Cllr Westrop **Agreed** unanimously

*The clerk rejoined the meeting*

#### **13. CORRESPONDENCE TO NOTE**

- **CH Village Hall committee** - Monthly accounts are now being shared with the Parish Clerk and Cllr Deeks as Village Hall Committee representative. A joint working group meeting with Parish Council, Hall & Club representatives is being planned for early in the New Year.

#### **14. AGENDA ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING**

- **Budget and Precept** to be set for the 2024-2025 financial year
- **BDC Potential Open Space Improvements plan** (formerly Open Spaces Action Plan). Updates due by 26th January 2024
- **Public Inquiry Footpath 25 diversion** – preparation of case and arrangements for attendance

#### **15. NEXT MEETINGS:**

<b>NO MEETING IN DECEMBER</b>			
<b>Monday 8<sup>th</sup> January 2023</b>	<b>7.30pm</b>	<b>Ordinary Parish Council</b>	<b>Castle Hedingham Club</b>

**The meeting closed at 9.43pm**

SIGNED (CHAIRMAN)

DATE

## Appendix 1: Financial Report

### PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS FOR AUTHORISATION NOVEMBER 2023

Nov-23	Payments in Month	Details	Amount
DD	Npower	Electricity New Park	£0.00
DD	Octopus Energy	Electricity Toilets	£27.42
DD	Invoco (GOCARDLESS)	Portable telephone number	£1.32
DD	Peoples Partnership	Peoples Pension	tbc
B/P	BDC	Uncontested election cost	£70.05
B/P	M D Landscapes	Grass Cutting October	£721.20
B/P	E C Waters	Home as Office	£75.00
B/P	E C Waters	Office Expenses Sept 11th to Oct 9th	£19.32
B/P	CH Club	November meeting	£20.00
B/P	Staff	Salaries	tbc
B/P	HMRC	Tax/NI October month 6	tbc
CHQ	Hedingham British Legion	Remembrance Wreath	£60.00
<b>TOTAL in month</b>			<b>£994.31</b>

Nov-23	Receipts in Month	Details	Amount
01-Nov	Daniel Robinson	Purchase & interment grave 300	£385.00
01-Nov	Daniel Robinson	Purchase & interment grave 301	£635.00
03-Nov	Harvey Darke	Memorial inscription grave 203	£79.00
<b>TOTAL in month</b>			<b>£1,099.00</b>

#### Accounts balances at 13th November 2023

		Interest 2023-24
Unity Trust Current account	£19,337.07	N/A
Unity Trust Deposit account	£10,713.30	£132.31
Cambridge & Counties 95 day	£36,075.53	£810.75
<b>TOTAL RESERVES</b>	<b>£66,125.90</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	£5,271.91	
<b>GENERAL RESERVE (50% of precept is advised)</b>	<b>£28,983.59</b>	

## RECONCILED PAYMENTS AND RECEIPTS OCTOBER 2023

<b>Oct-23</b>	<b>Payments in Month</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Amount</b>
DD	Npower	Electricity New Park	£0.00
DD	Octopus Energy	Electricity Toilets	£20.90
DD	Invoco (GOCARDLESS)	Portable telephone number	£1.32
DD	Peoples Partnership	Peoples Pension	£77.81
B/P	BDC	Rates Pump House	£5.00
B/P	M D Landscapes	Grass Cutting September	£565.20
B/P	A&J Lighting	Monthly Charge	£0.00
B/P	E C Waters	Home as Office	£75.00
B/P	E C Waters	Office Expenses Sept 11th to Oct 9th	£53.96
B/P	CH Club	October meeting	£20.00
B/P	Staff	Salaries	£1,712.53
B/P	HMRC	Tax/NI September month 6	£196.20
B/P	Darkins	Wheelbarrow wheel/jerry can spout	£28.98
B/P	P M Smith	Payroll July-Sept	£57.60
<b>TOTAL in month</b>			<b>£2,814.50</b>

<b>Oct-23</b>	<b>Receipts in Month</b>	<b>Details</b>	<b>Amount</b>
20-Oct	County Broadband	Hyperfast Foundation	£50.00
<b>TOTAL in month</b>			<b>£50.00</b>