

Moreton, Bobbingworth and the Lavers Parish Council

MINUTES

Meeting: Annual Council Meeting

Date: 17 May 2022

Time: 7.30 PM

Venue: Moreton Village Hall

PRESENT:

Councillors (10): Cllr Padfield (Chairman), Cllr Collins, Cllr Busch, Cllr Cooper, Cllr Crosbie, Cllr Darken, Cllr Foulser, Cllr Hall, Cllr Martin, Cllr Stuart

Also in Attendance (2): Gurdip Paddan – Clerk
PC Warren Shepherd

Members of the Public: (3)

Members of the Press (0)

PC.152 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Cllr Rosemary Padfield was PROPOSED Chairman by Cllr Busch. This was SECONDED by Cllr Collins and following a vote, Cllr Padfield was duly elected as Chairman for the current municipal year. Cllr Padfield completed her declaration of Acceptance of Office.

Cllr Collins was thanked for serving as Chairman for the past two years during the challenging period of lockdown and instigating Zoom meetings.

PC.153 ELECTION OF VICE-CHAIRMAN

Cllr Andy Stuart was PROPOSED as Vice Chairman by Cllr Busch. This was SECONDED by Cllr Darken and following a vote, Cllr Stuart was duly elected as Vice Chairman for the current municipal year.

PC.154 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs Dawson, Kessock-Philip and Leverich.
Cllr Hadley – District Councillor

It was agreed that the Clerk writes to Members to remind them that they must submit their apology for absence via email before the scheduled meeting.

PC.155 OTHER ABSENCES

None.

PC.156 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None received. Councillors were reminded that they should review their interests on a regular basis.

PC.157 VACANCY

Members noted that the Notice of Vacancy had been published and the closing date was 23 May 2022. Subject to there being no election called, the co-option of a councillor would be considered at the July meeting.

The Clerk confirmed that she had already written to Robert Radbourne, thanking him for his contribution to the Council and the Parish.

PC.158 REPORTS

Members received a report from PC Warren Shepherd who advised that it has taken him some time to schedule in a meeting for this Parish. Unfortunately Covid had not helped. He gave a brief summary of his background and work. He covers a large area within the District and confirmed that it would not be possible to attend another MBL Parish Council meeting this year due to workloads.

The following statistics were reported; primarily covering a period from May 2021 to May 2022:

- 1) 58 incidents reported to the Police during the past year.
- 2) Increase in the number of calls to 999 regarding disturbances at the White Hart pub. He will be monitoring the situation and if required he will seek assistance from the Licensing Team at EFDC.
- 3) Of the 58 recorded crimes it was noted that these included a theft of a motor vehicle and gates to a field.
- 4) Compared to the previous year 65 reported incidents and 13 crimes were recorded and these included theft of a vehicle, theft of plant machinery and a burglary.
- 5) It was noted that since January 2021, there had only been one burglary.
- 6) 10.76% reduction in actual phone calls to the Police and a 46.15% reduction in crime.
- 7) PC Shepherd was finding that a number of council meetings within his area were scheduled whilst he is not on duty and therefore unable to attend.
- 8) He will be sending in similar statistical data to the Clerk so that figures can be reported at meetings.
- 9) If any Councillor wishes to ask PC Shepherd a question, they can do so via the Clerk. Questions to be submitted to the Clerk two weeks in advance of the meeting.
- 10) A question was raised in respect of parking in front of someone's drive. PC Shepherd clarified that if you block the car in on their drive it is illegal otherwise legal to park across a drive.

PC Shepherd was thanked for his attendance and the report.

In terms of future reports from Councillors, it was requested that the Clerk be notified and if possible a written report be presented.

PC.159 PARISHIONERS' FORUM

Parish Christmas tree – it was AGREED that this item be placed on the July meeting agenda for discussion.

A question was raised in respect of sharing a local number for the Police, as on occasions residents are aware of incidents and in a position to alert the Police before the crowds disperse. PC Shepherd can provide a phone number but he would only be able to respond if he is on duty. It was felt that it would be best to call 101 or 999. He further added that it is better to call 999 if there is going to be a fight. An email to him would be more appropriate as he would be able to pick this up between other duties. But any incidents that require Police presence immediately; a 999 call is advisable for any disturbance/fight.

A question was put to PC Shepherd by a member of the public in terms of taking cocaine and fighting being part and parcel of being in Essex. The parishioner was advised that unfortunately this was wide spread and not just in Essex. Taking drugs has consequences.

PC.160 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

The Minutes of the meetings held on 8 March 2022 and 27 April 2022 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

PC.161 2021/22 CHAIRMAN'S ANNUAL REPORT

Members NOTED the Chairman's report for 2021/22.

PC.162 REPRESENTATIONS ON OUTSIDE BODIES

Councillors AGREED the following Council representatives on outside bodies:

Magdalen Laver Village Hall
Moreton Village Hall
Footpath Representative
Epping Forest Country Care
Bobbingworth Nature Reserve
Joint Standards Committee
EF Branch of the EALC
Local Council's Liaison Committee

Cllr Carol Foulser
Cllr John Collins
Cllr Ewen Crosbie
Cllr Graeme Cooper
Cllr Graeme Cooper
Cllr Rosemary Padfield
Cllr Angela Busch (on occasions) and the Clerk
Cllr Angela Busch (on occasions) and the Clerk

- a) It was noted that Neighbourhood Watch information was circulated on a regular basis.
- b) It was noted that the Parish Council was represented by the District Council on Highway matters.

PC.163 APPOINTMENT OF INTERNAL AUDITOR

Members noted that Ann Wood had been the Internal Auditor for the past two years. Following a brief discussion, it was AGREED to defer this item until the next meeting.

PC.164 INSURANCE

The Council's insurance cover was due for renewal on 1 June 2022 and Councillors AGREED to continue with Zurich at a cost of £ 368.56 per annum. All AGREED.

PC.165 STANDING ORDERS AND FINANCIAL REGULATIONS

The Standing Orders and Financial Regulations of the Parish Council are used to confirm our internal organisational, administrative, procurement procedures and procedural matters for its operation and functioning. Both documents were reviewed last year and it is a requirement that these are reviewed at least annually. Copies were attached to the agenda. Councillors AGREED no changes were necessary at this point and adopted both documents as presented. PROPOSED Cllr Hall and SECONDED, Cllr Cooper. All AGREED.

A comment was made in respect of the language around 'time' within Standing Orders and whether it would be possible to consider time boxing certain agenda items to make the best use of everyone's time. At present the agenda items are open ended but having allocated time for discussion of an item, depending upon the subject/importance, may be helpful. It was clarified that the length of the meeting is set before one discusses the item. It was AGREED to consider possible amendments to Standing Orders in the future.

PC.166 COUNCIL POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

The following Policies were considered and APPROVED for 2022/23:

- a) GDPR Policy – Data Protection
- b) Grievance Procedure
- c) Disciplinary Policy
- d) Equality and Diversity
- e) Bullying and Harassment

The Clerk had recommended that the Council creates and approves the following Policies during 2022/23:

- 1. Complaints
- 2. Planning
- 3. Grants

The Clerk to draft the above three policies for Councillors to consider during the year.

PROPOSED Cllr Busch and SECONDED, Cllr Hall. All AGREED.

PC.167 ASSET REGISTER

The Asset Register was NOTED and it was agreed that the Clerk's address be updated and the Bobbingworth noticeboard (by St. Germain's and Gainsthorpe Road) be included.

PC.168 RISK ASSESSMENT

The Risk Assessment was NOTED. No changes were deemed necessary.

PC.169 ACCOUNTS 2021/22

The accounts for 2021/22 were circulated with the agenda for approval. It was PROPOSED and SECONDED to adopt these accounts and after a vote was taken, the accounts, as presented were unanimously AGREED.

PC.170 ANNUAL RETURN 2021/22

The Council's gross income and expenditure for 2021/22 was below £25,000 and therefore the Council meets the qualifying criteria as part of the audit regime to be able to certify itself as exempt from a limited assurance review.

The Council APPROVED the following:

- Certificate of Exemption (page 3 of the Return)
- Annual Governance and Accountability Return (Part 2) which is made up of:
 - Annual Internal Audit Report (page 4) to be completed by the authority's internal auditor.
 - Section 1 – Annual Governance Statement (page 5) to be completed by the authority.
 - Section 2 – Accounting Statements (page 6) to be completed by the authority.

Councillors were asked to note that the date on which the External Audit must be approved by the Parish Council was 1 July 2022. As there will not be Council meeting prior to this time, Council considered the following:

- a) Complete a review of the effectiveness of the system of internal control
- b) Consider the findings of any such review
- c) Prepare and approve the Annual Governance Statement by way of resolution (Section 1)
- d) Consider and approve the Accounting Statements (section 2)
- e) Ensure the Accounting statements are signed and dated by the person presiding at the meeting

It was NOTED that the period of public rights and publication of the unaudited annual return was between 13 June and 22 July (The latest possible dates that comply with the statutory requirements being 1 July to 11 August), and that the relevant notices will be erected prior to this date. In addition, smaller authorities must publish various documents on a public website, as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2015, the Local Audit (Smaller Authorities) Regulations 2015 and the Transparency Code for Smaller Authorities.

The above Certificate of Exemption and the Annual Return were APPROVED and it was PROPOSED, Cllr Busch and SECONDED, Cllr Crosbie and unanimously AGREED.

PC.171 GRANT FOR MAINTENANCE OF PARISH AREAS

Members considered the briefing note which had been circulated with the agenda in respect of a grant for the maintenance of Parish areas. The request was for £3,000.

Cllr Stuart advised that the request was from Community Spirit to maintain the Parish areas that do not fall within the jurisdiction of District or County maintenance programmes.

The following points were raised and discussed:

- a. The approved sum of £3,000 would be utilised within all the Wards of the Parish.
- b. The money would be a pool fund to be spent as required – e.g. grass verges, green areas, hedges, small bushes/trees, signage and fence repairs. Only for the maintenance of the Parish areas.
- c. It was suggested that items of maintenance be discussed individually.
- d. Members noted that Community Spirit do a superb job but concern was expressed in terms of how and where the money would be spent. It was suggested that the grant be specially made to the establishment for the specific purpose.

- e. Cllr Stuart advised that the Council would be provided with details from Community Spirit on how and where the funds have been utilised within the year. If the Parish Council is comfortable with the response (work carried out) this item could be reassessed.
- f. It was confirmed that funds could not be provided to maintain the churchyards which are the responsibility of the parochial church council (PCC); unless the churchyard is closed and therefore the responsibility under the 'Order of Council' can be transferred to the Parish Council. A Member made reference to nearby parish councils' financial investments within their accounts to the maintenance of churchyards. It was confirmed that both Fyfield and North Weald churchyards were closed and therefore maintained by their respective parishes.
- g. This funding request was similar to the one made for the Jubilee event – a specific earmarked fund.
- h. It was confirmed that this grant would be earmarked for the work required and would be identifiable in terms of how and where it has been utilised.
- i. Members were reminded that this item had been discussed at a previous meeting and it agreed that this would be the best way of putting this forward to the Council.
- j. A comment was made on the funds made available to the Friends of the Churches in the past and no reports had been requested.
- k. It was noted that Community Spirit is not a registered charity and therefore not governed by policies of a charitable regulator. It was further noted that neither was Friends of Churches a registered charity.

It was PROPOSED, Councillor Crosbie and SECONDED, Councill Hall and AGREED

(Vote: 9 for and 1 abstention)

A grant of £3,000 to be made to Community Spirit for the maintenance of the Parish areas.

Clerk's Post Minute Note – Search has identified that there is a joint Friends of St Mary's and St Germain's Churches, registered charity No 1082085. The Friends of Lavers Churches are also a registered charity No 1051320.

PC.172 FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) The following payments were AGREED:

Payment	To	For	Total
BACS	G Paddan	Reimbursement - Wix – subscription for website (paid £136.80 on 13 March) Travel 12 miles x 45p = £5.40 Home office (£10 x 26 weeks = £260.00)	£402.20
BACS	G Paddan	Salary (March)	£911.64
BACS	HMRC	NI and Tax for March 2022	£352.25
BACS	A Rogers	Payroll	£20.00
BACS	Moreton V/Hall	Hall Hire – 11 Jan, 1 Feb and 8 Feb	£75.00
BACS	EALC & NALC	Affiliation fee	£388.63
BACS	Zurich	Insurance	£368.56
BACS	G Paddan	Salary (April)	£749.85
BACS	HMRC	April – NI+Tax	£298.72
BACS	A Rogers	Payroll	£22.00

b) The Bank Balances as at 5 May 2022 were NOTED:

Unity Current Account	£ 883.29
Unity Deposit Account	£43,562.45

PC.173 PLANNING

a) The following planning applications below which have been responded to by way of the Clerk's delegated powers following email consultation with Councillors were NOTED:

EPF/2309/20	Envilles Barns, Two Hoots Barn, Abbess, Little Laver CM5 0JH	Proposed subdivision to create two dwellings
<p>The Council has no objection to the separation of this property creating two individual dwellings. Our Neighbourhood Plan (Policy MBL 1.1) supports small houses. There is no further increase of the footprint and therefore no impact on the Green Belt.</p> <p>Our extreme concern is about the site access and we urge EFDC to consult with Highways and the Fire Service. The road access to this site is too narrow for a Fire engine to reach these properties; photographs of the road access for provided.</p> <p>The access is via a private road owned by a local farmer and the final stretch of the access goes across Envilles Farmhouse's garden via a very narrow road between a post and rail fence. At the end of this narrow road is an electric gate. The tarmac road width is 2.66m and even taking the grass verges into account it is only 3.2m. Essex Fire Service needs 3.7 m for access by a fire engine and 17.8 m as a turning circle. This is simply not safe to have six houses that cannot be reached by a fire engine. The Fire engine vehicle facts have been sourced from the following link: https://www.essex-fire.gov.uk/img/pics/pdf_1564063286.pdf</p>		
EPF/0495/22	Hobbs View Moreton Road Ongar CM5 0LX	Replacement dwelling and garaging within existing garden curtilage - minor house redesign and repositioning within curtilage.
<p>The Parish Council objects to the proposal of the replacement dwelling and garaging within existing garden curtilage - minor house redesign and repositioning within curtilage, which constitutes overdevelopment in the Green Belt, as it increases floor area of the dwelling by approximately 50-60%. The application now has a basement, which could be acquired by permitted development however, there is a condition (no 14) attached on EPF/1693/21 whereby permitted development rights A, AA, B, D and E have been withdrawn of Part 1, Schedule 2. We understand that light wells require planning permission. The additional attic room at present show no windows; whilst this is not adding to the footprint but it increases the internal volume of the previously granted application. It may cause harm to trees and we would welcome root protection of the trees, where the development would restrict future planting and mature development of tree typical to the area and any impact to the water environment.</p> <p>We would like to see that the gardens maintain their biodiversity function for flora and fauna and that they are capable of continuing to contribute to the landscape character of the area.</p>		
EPF/0509/22	Greens Farm Little Laver Road Moreton, CM5 0JE	Addition of two number rooflights into roof on east elevation and change to window on west elevation.
No objection.		
EPF/0368/22	New Farm House Newhouse lane Ongar, CM5 0DH	Grade II Listed Building Application for proposed alterations to the existing residential annexe.
No objection.		
EPF/0570/22	Whitesides Tilegate Road CM5 0ED	Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for existing use of garden, currently classed as agricultural land.
No objection		

b) Councillors NOTED the following Planning decisions by EFDC:

EPF/3237/21	Paddocks Little Laver Road Little Laver CM17 0RH	Alterations to existing front bays and construct of new entrance canopy. Alterations to existing windows.	Permission Granted with conditions.
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EPF/3082/21	8 Pedlars End Moreton Ongar, CM5 0LR	Application for a Lawful Development certificate for a proposed loft conversion. (Lawful Development Certificate)	Lawful
EPF/0016/22	3 Bundish Hall Cottages Ongar Road CM5 OHP	Single storey side extension forming a new living area.	Permission Granted with conditions.
EPF/0030/22	Fairways Harlow Road High Laver CM5 0DL	Demolition of existing conservatory, single storey rear extension with internal alterations. Additional covered BBQ area side extension and modifications to existing rear dormers.	Permission Granted with conditions.
EPF/0188/22	Robins Acre High Laver Road High Laver CM5 0DX	Proposed two storey side extension.	Permission Granted with conditions.
EPF/0269/22	Highfield Moreton Road Bobbingworth CM5 0LU	Application for proposed demolition of existing single store rear extension and outbuilding. Construction of new first floor above existing footprint.	Permission Granted with conditions.
EPF/2188/21	The Dower House Harlow Road High Laver CM5 0DT	First floor extension, new porch, fenestration and dormer windows.	Permission Granted with conditions.
EPF/2446/21	Bush Hall Farm The Maltings Threshers Bush Matching CM17 0NS	Proposed single storey garden room.	Permission Refused.
EPF/2452/21	Bush Hall Farm The Maltings Threshers Bush Matching CM17 0NS	Grade II Listed Building application for a proposed single storey garden room.	Permission Refused.
EPF/3238/21	Paddocks Little Laver Road Little Laver CM17 0RH	Application for a Lawful Development Certificate for a proposed construction of a rear flat roof dormer/construction of 1m high walls to the front of the site as well as an entrance gate.	Lawful.
EPF/0226/22	Highfield Moreton Road Bobbingworth CM5 0LU	Application to determine if Prior Approval is required for a Larger Home Extension measuring 6.00m, height to eaves of 2.47 m and a maximum height of 3.76m.	Prior Approval not required.
EPF/0173/22	The Meadow Pedlars End Moreton CM5 0LW	Application to determine if Prior Approval is required for a proposed change of use from Agricultural Buildings to Dwelling houses (C3).	Not Lawful.

- c) Members NOTED the following planning applications that are still to be considered by the Council, the deadline for this Council's response being 27 May 2022.

None.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Darken for representing the Council at the District Council's Area Planning Sub-Committee East meeting of the 11 May in respect of the Tilegate application.

Some Councillors advised that they would be writing to Councillor Ian Hadley regarding his inexcusable behaviour at the said meeting. It was felt that he had not represented the Parish/electorate at EFDC meeting.

PC.174 CLERK'S COMMUNICATION

Members received an oral update on matters listed below:

- a) Wildlife Pond funding – communication from FWAG East Consultancy Ltd; this was circulated to all Members. The article was on behalf of Natural England. The funding available being for restoring old ponds and digging of new ponds in certain parts of Essex.
- b) Defibrillator training – The Clerk was waiting for the trainer to confirm his availability for a Saturday morning. All interested parties have been kept updated. It was suggested that an advertisement be placed in the local magazine to seek a suitable trainer. A further suggestion was made in terms of contacting a previous Councillor who may be able to assist.
- c) ECC – letter received from Mary Morris regarding footpath via the car park, which sought clarification on a number of points. A copy of the letter/document was circulated to Members. Cllr Crosbie had provided information which has been forwarded to Mary Morris.
- d) Planning Training session was held on 30 April 2022. Members found it a useful exercise.
- e) A meeting of the MBL PC's Neighbourhood Plan Review Committee will be arranged soon.
- f) The matter regarding responsibility of hedges and their maintenance was discussed. It was agreed that Members email the Clerk with the location and the if possible the owner of the land before the July meeting so that appropriate action can be taken following Council's decision in July.
- g) Communication for information purposes from EALC, EFDC and ECC is emailed to Members regularly.

PC.175 DATE OF MEETINGS FOR 2022

July 12	Moreton Village Hall
September 13	Magdalen Lavers Village Hall
November 8	Moreton Village Hall
December 6	Christmas tree light swich on and Moreton Green and Open Parish meeting at Moreton Village Hall

Meeting closed at 8.15pm

Chairman

Date