

MORETON, BOBBINGWORTH AND THE LAVERS PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES

Meeting: Annual Council Meeting

Date: 13th May 2025

Time: 7.30 PM

Venue: Moreton Village Hall

PRESENT:

Councillors (6): Cllr Crosbie (Chairman), Cllr Stuart, Cllr Offord, Cllr Day, Cllr Dawson, Cllr Collins

Also in Attendance (1): Adriana Jones – Clerk

Members of the Public: (2)

Members of the Press (0)

PC.579 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

Cllr Offord **PROPOSED** Cllr Crosbie be elected as Chairman for the current municipal year. This was **SECONDED** by Cllr Stuart, and unanimously agreed. Cllr Crosbie signed his declaration of acceptance of office.

PC.580 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

Cllr Crosbie **PROPOSED** Cllr Stuart as Vice Chairman. This was **SECONDED** by Cllr Offord, and unanimously agreed.

PC.581 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs Carpenter, Padfield and Darken had given their apologies. EFDC Cllr Balcombe had offered his apologies.

PC.582 OTHER ABSENCES

None.

PC.583 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

None.

PC.584 CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

Subject to one amendment under item PC.575 proposed by Cllr Stuart, the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 11th March 2025 were approved. **PROPOSED** Cllr Martin and **SECONDED** Cllr Dawson. Unanimously agreed.

PC.585 REPRESENTATION ON OUTSIDE BODIES

The following representation on outside bodies were **AGREED**:

Representation	2025/2026 Responsibility
Magdalen Laver Village Hall	Cllr Crosbie
Moreton Village Hall	Cllr Collins
Footpath Representatives	Cllr Crosbie
EFDC/ECC Transport	Parish Clerk where necessary
Epping Forest Countrycare	Cllr Offord
Bobbingworth Nature Reserve	Cllr Stuart
Crime and related issues	Cllr Darken
Joint Standards Committee	Cllr Padfield – awaiting update from EFDC as to if this committee is still current
EFDC Local Liaison / Branch meetings -	Cllr Crosbie / Clerk
Neighbourhood Plan Review Committee	Cllr Crosbie

PC.586 PARISHIONERS' FORUM

The Chairman welcomed members of the public present, however there were no questions.

PC.587 INSURANCE

The Council's insurance was due for renewal on 1st June. The Clerk had obtained a quote for £480.85, which included cover for the new defibrillator. Last year's cost was £453.48, thus this quote represented an increase of £27.37. The Chairman **PROPOSED** acceptance of this quote from Zurich Municipal. This was **SECONDED** by Cllr Offord, and unanimously agreed.

PC.588 DELEGATED POWERS

Councillors **AGREED** continuation of delegated powers to the Clerk, to allow her to respond to planning applications, the deadline for which may be prior to the next available meeting. The delegated powers involve the Clerk obtaining the views of all Councillors on planning applications, and then responding to the Local Planning Authority with the majority view within the timeframe provided.

PC.589 REPORTS

- a) Chairmans report – The Chairman had read out a comprehensive report at the Annual Meeting of the Electorate which took place prior to this meeting, a copy of which had been sent to all Councillors.
- b) Vice Chairmans report – No report
- c) District and County Councillor reports - None
- d) Parish Councillor reports – Cllr Collins had previously advised the Clerk that the location of the Grit Bin at Pedlars End wasn't ideal, and stated during the meeting that in reality there wasn't a suitable alternative location for it to go. The issue was the surrounding overgrowth of brambles which could make access difficult. It was agreed to look at this again in September, when perhaps Cllr Collins and Cllr Stuart would attend site and cut back the brambles in preparation for the winter. Cllr Collins advised that historically he had suggested the Council purchased a spreader and that he would grit the local roads, however permission would be needed from ECC and come with all sorts of liability issues, so this had not been progressed.
- e) Police Report – PC Shepherd had submitted a written report as follows:

Stats for period 05/02/25 to 05/05/25 - 19 calls to police, of these calls 5 crimes were recorded. Of those 5 crimes the following are crimes considered to have an impact on community:

0 Residential Burglaries, 0 Attempted Residential Burglary, 0 Residential Burglaries of Unconnected Buildings (garage or shed break in etc), 1 Theft of Motor Vehicle, 0 Theft from Motor Vehicles, 0 Vehicle Interference (Trying Car Door Handles etc)

Stats for period 05/02/24 to 05/05/24 to compare - 20 calls to police, of these calls 7 crimes were recorded. Of those 7 crimes the following are crimes considered to have an impact on community:

0 Residential Burglaries, 0 Attempted Residential Burglary, 1 Residential Burglaries of Unconnected Buildings (garage or shed break in etc), 0 Theft of Motor Vehicle, 0 Theft from Motor Vehicles, 0 Vehicle Interference (Trying Car Door Handles etc)

Calls to police are the same with one less and there has been two crimes less than same period last year so crime is down slightly.

Councillors were grateful of the report from PC Warren, but the Clerk questioned if the reports included all the crimes in the Parish, or if they were just selected based on community impact. It was **AGREED** the Clerk would contact PC Shepherd to ascertain this. Cllr Collins advised that the Moreton Watch social media pages provided weekly updates for Rural East, however this was a large area.

PC.590 REPAIR PEDLARS END SIGN

To date the Clerk had been unable to obtain permission from Highways for works to repair the sign, and as such had gone directly to Cllr Tom Cunningham, ECC Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Sustainable Transport for a response. On 6th May a holding response was received saying a further update would be provided. Dependent on progress with this enquiry, the Chairman **PROPOSED** a maximum amount of £250 for works to repair the sign, with the Clerk given delegated powers to progress this following the response from ECC. This was **SECONDED** by Cllr Day, and unanimously agreed.

PC.591 PUBLIC RIGHTS OF WAY

1. Cllr Day advised he had reported via the ECC reporting page an issue regarding Magdalen Laver 32 – as you go over the brook and straight ahead it should be a footpath - as the footpath had not been reinstated after ploughing. Cllr Day stated that this had not been done in 2 years. The report had been updated earlier in the day stating that an inspector would carry out an assessment to determine the next appropriate action, which may include a site visit, which could take up to 56 days. The Clerk

asked Cllr Day to update her within 2 weeks as to if any action had been taken, as the 56 days goes way beyond the legal timeframe that farmers have to reinstate footpaths.

2. Councillors noted that the Clerk had contacted (via EALC) all other Councils in the Essex area to establish if any of them had a novel solution to stopping unauthorised vehicles driving on PRow, however the responses simply suggested increased signage and regular reporting to the police. The Clerk understands that the member of public who reported this matter at the last meeting had done both things. The Clerk also reported this matter to PC Shepherd, who responded stating he would keep an eye out when he is around that way. He also stated that the issue with it being a Byway is there is little that can be done because Highways would not generally be supportive if gates and barriers were installed. It was clear there is no quick fix to resolving this issue.
3. Cllr Stuart advised that he had attended a lunch at which Mr Alan Roscoe (Public Rights of Way Officer for Epping District and Harlow) and a number of residents were present, at which Mr Rusoe provided some extremely useful information about how to report PRow issues. Councillors **AGREED** that this information should be adapted to an easily legible format and placed on the Parish Council website, social media, notice boards and also possibly in the two parish magazines.

PC.592 COMMUNITY DEFIBRILLATORS

Councillors noted that the new defibrillator had now been installed at Little Laver, meaning the Parish Council now provided a community defibrillator in each ward, all three of which are registered with 'The Circuit'. The Chairman advised that he had now received full instructions as to how to connect the boxes to the telephone box, and this would be completed before the cooler weather sets in. It was **AGREED** to purchase 4 x Defib Signs for the box, and to erect laminated notices within the box itself.

PC.593 INTERNAL AUDIT 24/25

This item was deferred as the audit had not yet been received. An extraordinary meeting of the Council would be held in June to consider this matter.

PC.594 ELECTRONIC NOTIFICATION

Councillors **AGREED** to the receipt of all meeting notifications, agendas, minutes, and all general correspondence to be received via email.

PC.595 APPROVAL OF ACCOUNTS 2024/2025

A copy of the draft accounts for 24/25 was attached to the agenda. Councillor Day **PROPOSED** these accounts be approved. This was **SECONDED** by Cllr Offord, and unanimously agreed.

PC.596 ANNUAL GOVERNANCE AND ACCOUNTABILITY RETURN 2024/2025

This item was deferred as the result of the internal audit had not yet been received. An extraordinary meeting of the Council would be held in June to consider this matter.

PC.597 SCHOOL PARKING / TRAFFIC

Cllr Day advised that he was not aware of any particular issues at this time. The Clerk advised that she had been liaising with EFDC Cllr Balcombe, who following an approach from EFDC Cllr Mary Dadd had attended a meeting at Moreton School on 21st March. A further meeting with the Local Highway Panel representative, a senior highway engineer, the police commander, PC Shepherd, the inspector for traffic, and Cllr Dadd had been held on 24th March looking at the wider area of Ongar, Fyfield, High Ongar, and Moreton. Cllr Balcombe explained there was some consideration about having timed double red lines on the opposite side of the road to the school, and that the school was looking to create a working group consisting of a couple of parents, a couple of residents opposite the school, Cllr Balcombe, along with a Parish Councillor and the Clerk.

The Chairman agreed a member of the public could address the Council, and it was reported that they drop off their granddaughter on occasions at the school, and that it can be absolute chaos, especially if the Dog and Pickle only open up one of the gates. They suggested that the issues were caused by a mix of local residents and parents, with both on occasion causing problems. The Chairman advised that the Dog and Pickle were under no obligation to allow use of the car park. Councillors expressed concern that if yellow or red lines were placed on the road, how would this be enforced, as it would be a complete waste of time if they were not. Cllr Offord asked if the rear side entrance to school was still being used, to which it was confirmed it was.

Councillors **AGREED** they would like to be part of any working group at the school, with Cllr Dawson and the Clerk being this council's representatives.

PC.598 HERITAGE GRANT FUND

At the March meeting, Cllr Mclvor raised the fact that Historic England had a grant funding scheme which the Parish Council may wish to consider for a project that perhaps recognises historic rural stories. The Clerk had emailed Councillors, with some responses suggesting this may be something we wish to look at. Historic England has so far funded 141 projects across the country that invite participants to take a role in shaping how their local heritage is recognised and celebrated. They have funded projects about social clubs, pubs, sports and music venues, farms, factories, local industries, and railway stations. All of the projects are co-created with local communities, to shine a light on diverse stories of working class heritage that are often overlooked or forgotten. Organisations and individuals could apply for up to £25,000 for their projects. Cllr Stuart advised there were some extremely interesting historic stories and connections in the parish. The Clerk advised she had been given the contact details of a local historian in the Lavers. It was **AGREED** that the Clerk would contact him, and both Cllr Stuart and the Clerk should look into this project, bringing to the next meeting suggestions as to important historical events or people could be commemorated, along with suggestions as to how this should be done.

PC.599 COMMUNITY SPEEDWATCH

No update.

PC.560 EMAIL PROVIDER

The Parish Council currently uses Vikatechost as its email hosting provider and domain host. The annual cost to provide emails is £46.92, which includes 1GB of storage per email provided. There have been a couple of issues with emails recently, and the annual contract for this provider ends at the end of June. The Clerk had looked at alternative providers, and was making a recommendation to Council to consider moving to Cloudnext – an email hosting provider which caters for local government bodies, the cost of which is £49.99 per year for up to 25 email addresses with a 2GB storage capacity for each. Cllr Collins **PROPOSED** the Council move to Cloudnext. This was **SECONDED** by Cllr Offord, and unanimously agreed.

PC.601 NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

Councillors **NOTED** that the Neighbourhood Plan for this Parish had been fully reviewed and updated, and the updated Plan had been formally accepted by EFDC. The newly updated plan is on the Parish Councils website.

PC.602 CLERKS COMMUNICATIONS AND CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

The Clerk reported the following:

- a) ECC, EFDC, EALC and RCCE communications are emailed to Members on a regular basis and where relevant information is included
- b) To confirm no funding requested for VE Day community events.
- c) Annual service on Bobbingworth Clock has been completed – cost was £223.97
- d) One report of odour from Envar site – Alex Burghart MP's secretary responded to complainant – no further issues reported
- e) Enquiry regarding Cllr Mclvor's funding for defibrillator, concerning Reform group
- f) 'Tommy' had been placed on Moreton Village Green for VE Day 80th Anniversary
- g) Use of Moreton Noticeboard – noted that both the Chairman and Cllr Day held keys to the noticeboard. The notice board was primarily for Council matters, however could be used for other local matters of interest, but this should be agreed with the Clerk beforehand
- h) Clerk responded to the Devolution consultation as agreed
- i) Cllr Collins confirmed he held the key to the padlock to the pump in Pedlars End. He provided a brief history setting out that the original lead pump was stolen, and that the Parish Council had historically paid to rebuild the pump housing. An information plaque was located at the pump, and it had been hoped to install a replica at some point in the future.

PC.603 COMMEMORATIVE BENCH CAROL FOULSER

The Chairman advised that the Magdalen Laver Village Hall Committee had now purchased the memorial bench, with a member of the committee and Cllr Crosbie set to install it at the hall shortly. The total cost for the bench, plaque and installation materials was £540 which the village hall committee had paid. As such, the Parish Councils agreed 50% cost was £270. Cllr Crosbie will update the Clerk when an official opening/unveiling would be taking place so that members of Carol's family, friends and members of this Parish Council could be in attendance.

PC.604 SIGNAGE AND SPEED ISSUES BOVINGER MILL - LHP

Following the application submitted to the LHP, a response had been received from the Highway Liaison Officer, full details of which were included within the agenda. Councillors noted that this area did not fall within the parameters for ECC to classify it as a village, thus the reduction to a 30MPH was not an option. In addition, should a speed survey be carried out, it was likely that very few people would be caught speeding as the road

is a 60MPH road. As such, it was **AGREED** that the LHP should focus more on improved signage to make it clear to drivers they were entering a residential area and should reduce their speed. The Clerk would look at possible options for signs, and suggest these to the LHP. Cllr Collins mentioned that a local resident in Moreton had advised they would be willing to erect some signage on their own land to help address speeding in Moreton.

PC.605 PLANNING

- a) Councillors noted that the Clerk would be attending the EFDC Planning Committee A on Wednesday 14th May with regard to EPF/2127/24 - Rebuilding to form 2 bed dwelling (Revised application to EPF/0928/22) at Sunnyside Pt Os 956, Kents Lane – to represent the Council. The Parish Council objected to this application on 16th November 2024, agreeing that it would be willing to attend a committee meeting should this matter progress to Committee. This application was being recommended for approval.
- b) Councillors **AGREED** responses to the following planning applications which may not have been responded to before the date of this meeting:

EPF/0753/25	Shielings, Cross Lees Lane, Moreton, Ongar, CM5 0HX	Demolition of existing bungalow and replace with new bungalow. NO OBJECTION
EPF/0841/25	Brook House, Harlow Road, Moreton, Ongar, CM5 0DL	Grade II listed building application for re-roofing, Replacement timber boarding, Repair and Replacement timber windows and doors. NO OBJECTION
EPF/0813/25HH & EPF/0837/25LB	Watermans End House, Watery Lane, Little Laver, Harlow, CM17 0RQ	Demolition of rear porch extension and large shed and glass house, relocating oil tank and small shed. Create new door opening to kitchen. New rear extension to form new guest suite, with swimming pool and car port. Listed Building application for the same. NO OBJECTION

- c) Councillors **NOTED** the following planning applications below which had been responded to by way of the Clerk's delegated powers following email consultation with Councillors:

EPF/0594/25 & EPF/0636/25LB	Hull Green Farm, Little Laver Road, Little Laver, Harlow, CM17 0RH	Solar photovoltaic panels to south-western roof of barn, and Listed Building Application for the same.
<i>The Parish Council has noted the content of the Conservation Officers report. In addition, members of the Parish Council also conducted a site visit to view the property itself, and the proposals in terms of the potential impact to the property as well as its Grade II Listed Farmhouse host. Regarding the location and proposed siting of the solar panels, the Parish Council has no objection in principle. However, further information should be provided to evidence that the solar panels can be safely installed onto the roof of the curtilage listed barn without negative significant damage to its structure. It should be recognised that this barn is curtilage listed, and whilst this categorisation provides the same protection as that of the listed building itself, its ancillary status serves primarily to protect the historical context and setting of the main listed building – Hull Green Farmhouse. The Parish Council understands that the role of the Conservation Officer is to ensure adequate protection for any heritage listed structures, however the Parish Council believes that on this occasion the applicant should be afforded the opportunity to provide further evidence (potentially in the form of a CARE assessment) setting out additional supporting information to evidence the suitability of the proposals.</i>		
EPF/0208/25	Police House, Church Road, Moreton, Ongar, CM5 0JD	Single storey rear extension. NO OBJECTION
EPF/0596/25	7, Yew Tree Cottage, Epping Road, Bobbingworth, Ongar, CM5 0DF	Works to tree - TPO/EPF/16/00 NO OBJECTION
EPF/0543/25	3, Gainsthorpe Road, Ongar, CM5 0NG	Single storey rear extension.
<i>Members of the Parish conducted site visits regarding the application with the agreement of both the applicant and the neighbouring property. This enabled Councillors to have a greater understanding of the impact on the neighbouring property. Whilst it is accepted that the applicant has reduced the size of their proposals when viewed alongside the previously refused application (EPF/0050/25 for which the Parish Council had no objection) it is the belief of the Parish Council that the proposed development, when combined with the cumulative impact</i>		

of the previous extensions, should be considered disproportionate, and would have an unacceptable impact on the neighbouring property. As such, the Parish Council OBJECTS to this application as it would be contrary to EFDC Local Plan Policy DM9, as the proposal fail to safeguard the amenity of the neighbouring property specifically in relation to overshadowing and light, and policy DM4 which states that extensions should not result in disproportionate additions relative to the original dwelling.		
EPF/0544/25	Highfield, Moreton Road, Bobbingworth, Ongar, CM5 0LU	Retrospective application for single storey rear extension. NO OBJECTION
EPF/0466/25	Firs House, Moreton Road, Bobbingworth, Ongar, CM5 0LU	Removal of existing side extension and front section of house. Construction of two storey front gable, single storey side extension and two storey rear extension, conversion of loft NO OBJECTION

d) Councillors **NOTED** the following planning applications for which EFDC **do not** accept comment:

EPF/0835/25	6, Maltings Hill, Moreton, Ongar, CM5 0JY	Certificate of lawful development for a proposed double storey rear extension and front porch. It was noted that the container had still not been removed, and that the Clerk should report this to EFDC Enforcement.
EPF/0574/25	3 Envilles Cottages, Abbess Road, Little Laver, Ongar, CM5 0JH	Certificate of lawful development for existing use of dwelling without compliance with agricultural tie.

e) Councillors **NOTED** the following planning decisions by EFDC:

EPF/0466/25	Firs House Moreton Road Bobbingworth Ongar CM5 0LU	Removal of existing side extension and front section of house. Construction of two storey front gable, single storey side extension and two storey rear extension, conversion of loft space and rear dormer - inline with Certificate of Lawful Development App	<i>Granted 16/4/25 The PC had no objection</i>
EPF/0613/25	New House Farm, Little Laver Road, Moreton, Ongar, CM5 0JE	Prior Notification for a steel portal framed agricultural lean-to.	<i>Granted 25/4/25 PC not notified as PN application</i>
EPF/2817/23	Embleys Farm, Binder Loams Ltd, Fyfield Road, Moreton, Ongar, CM5 0HY	Erection of two additional portal frame dry storage barns.	<i>Granted 5/3/25 PC had no objection</i>
EPF/0237/25	2, Moreton Bridge, Moreton, Ongar, CM5 0LL	Construct single storey rear extension to enlarge a bathroom and replace space to be used as a bedroom by a registered disabled person.	<i>Granted 6/3/25 PC had no objection</i>
EPF/2463/24	Shielings, Cross Lees Lane, Moreton, Ongar, CM5 0HX	To demolish an existing bungalow and replace it with a new bungalow.	<i>Refused 18/3/25 PC had no objection</i>
EPF/0091/25	2 Brookside Cottages, Tilegate Road, Magdalen Laver, Ongar, CM5 0EG	Certificate of lawful development for a proposed hip to gable and rear dormer roof extensions.	<i>Not Lawful 19/3/25 PC unable to comment</i>

f) To **NOTE** the following appeal:

EPF/1722/24 – Glenwood, Pedlars End, Moreton, Ongar, CM5 0LW

The development of three new dwellings in place of the existing dwelling and outhouses (Including permitted development approvals) on the site of Pedlars End, Moreton

Ref: APP/J1535/W/25/3360546

The Parish Council objected to this application

PC.606 FINANCIAL MATTERS

a) Councillors approved the payments below. **PROPOSED** Cllr Day, **SECONDED** Cllr Stuart:

BACS	A Jones	Jan, Feb & Mar, and Apr 2025 salary	£2,218.72
BACS	HMRC	Jan, Feb & Mar and April 2025 PAYE	£554.60
BACS	HMRC	Employers National Insurance cont Apr	£41.45
BACS	Magdalen Laver Village Hall	50% cost commemorative bench Cllr Foulser	£270.00
BACS	EALC	Annual Subs EALC / NALC	£436.32
BACS	Public Clocks	Annual Service on Bobbingworth Church Clock	£223.97
BACS	Zurich Insurance	Insurance 25/26	£480.85
BACS	X2	4 x Defibrillator signs for Little Laver Phone Box	£109.44 (VAT £18.24)

- b) Councillors **NOTED** the correspondence from HMRC relating to an overpayment on the account. The Clerk confirmed she had submitted a full history of the matter to the Chairman, and provided a summary for Councillors. It was **AGREED** that the next two PAYE payments from the Clerk should be refunded to her, and that the remaining PAYE payments should be transferred each month into an EMR to be held for the foreseeable future until such time as the credit on HMRC account had been cleared. The Clerk explained she was not trusting of HMRC in that they wouldn't come back and say the Council owed money, hence why these funds should be held in an EMR.

PC.607 ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

- RCCE / Moreton Village Hall meeting – Cllr Collins advised it was his understanding that the farmer had not yet met with RCCE, and that there was no update at this time.
- Application to register Moreton Village Green – no update
- Devolution and Local Government Reform – no update
- Planning site visits – Cllr Darken

PC.608 DATES OF NEXT MEETING

Meeting in June – Date TBC

Tuesday 15th July 2025 – Magdalen Laver Village Hall (this is third Tuesday)

Tuesday 9th September 2025 – Moreton VH

Tuesday 11th November 2025 – Moreton VH

Tuesday 9th December 2025 – Moreton VH

Meeting closed 8.31pm

Chairman

Date