



**CRESSING PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of a meeting of Cressing Parish Council**  
**held on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2019 at 7.30pm**  
**at St Barnabas, Claud Ince Avenue, Cressing**

**Present:** Cllr John Lawton – Chairman  
Cllr Alison Lapper  
Cllr Colin Haines  
Cllr Harvey Porrett  
Cllr Susan Simpson  
Cllr Steve Watts

**In attendance:** Mrs Christine Marshall (Parish Clerk/RFO)  
County Councillor Robert Mitchell (to end item 19/157)  
District Cllr James Abbott (to end item 19/157)  
One member of the public

**Apologies:** District Councillor Bob Wright

**19/154 CHAIRMAN'S WELCOME AND REPORT**

The Chairman welcomed those in attendance and reported as follows:

- The Chairman attended the Remembrance Service at All Saints Church on 10<sup>th</sup> November, but was disappointed that there were only 25 attendees, of which only two were Parish Councillors.
- The Clerk/RFO has reported the missing temporary road sign that prohibited heavy vehicles from using Jeffrey's Road to access the Bellway site.
- The Chairman and Clerk/RFO are still trying to arrange a meeting with the Cressing Sports & Social Club. *(Since the meeting this has now been confirmed.)*
- A couple of residents have now shown interest in becoming Speedwatch Volunteers. The Clerk/RFO will follow up on this to determine costs and whether there is a possibility of sharing the cost with a neighbouring parish.

**19/155 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies received on behalf of District Cllr Wright, who hoped to join the meeting later.

**19/156 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Members of the council are subject to the Local Authorities Code of Conduct Order 2007 (SI 2007/1159) (The Revised Code) with the additional, non-mandatory, section 12(2).

Declarations of non-pecuniary interest:

There were no pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in relation to items on the agenda to be recorded.

**19/157 REPORTS BY COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCILLORS**

District Councillor Abbott reported:

- Local Plan Section 1 examination due to begin on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020 with transport and infrastructure scheduled for 16<sup>th</sup> January. Cllr Abbott confirmed he will be participating
- Speculative planning applications continue to be received by BDC, one of which by Croudace to the north-west of Silver End will finish a short way before Egypt's Farm in Cressing.
- The NHS now has sufficient S.106 money/developer contributions to provide another doctors' surgery and Cllr Abbott is seeking a start date for this.
- BDC Performance Management Board will consider BDC's budget for 2020/21 at their

November meeting. It has been requested that the LHP should have its budget re-instated at a higher level.

- Concern has been shown over the flat performance of recycling levels and a request has been made for collections of green bins to be extended. Tetra packs (cardboard drinks' cartons) are no longer accepted for recycling.
- Hedge cutting has taken place throughout the district, but a lot of litter has been left behind. A contractor is being engaged to clear this.
- Cllr Abbott has put forward a request for dropped kerbs at the junction of Jeffrey's Road/Mill Lane. The Clerk/RFO advised other locations have also been submitted and will follow up.

County Councillor Robert Mitchell reported:

- More recycling is needed.
- A further speed survey is being undertaken along Polecat Road following significant change to traffic flow consequent upon the recent developments, but Cllr Porrett suggested this was in the wrong place again and should be moved further towards the B1018 junction.
- Flooding at the corner of the B1018 is being investigated again and Cllr Mitchell has requested a copy of the report when available.
- Cllr Mitchell agreed that Essex Highways ask for insufficient contributions for road improvements when new developments are submitted for planning. This is now being addressed.
- Cllr Abbott confirmed that County Councillors can support and put forward LHP schemes that are against policy, in which case they would be referred to Cabinet. Cllr Watts and the Clerk/CLERK/RFO will look at suitable schemes for submission. **Action: Cllr Watts & Clerk/RFO**

#### 19/158 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION SESSION

No requests to speak had been received.

#### 19/159 MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 9<sup>TH</sup> OCTOBER 2019

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 9<sup>th</sup> October 2019 were confirmed as a correct record. **Proposed: Cllr Haines, seconded Cllr Porrett, all in favour.** Minutes duly signed by the Chairman.

#### 19/160 COUNCIL POLICIES

The Clerk/RFO presented reviewed policies: Equality & Diversity rev.2 and Reserves, Balances and Investments rev.2. There were no queries and a motion to approve and adopt these policies was put forward. **It was resolved** to adopt these policies without amendment. **Proposed: Cllr Lapper, seconded Cllr Watts, all in favour.**

The Code of Conduct had previously been reviewed but had not been minuted, consequently it was now re-presented for adoption. There were no queries and a motion to approve and adopt this policy was put forward. **It was resolved** to adopt these policies without amendment. **Proposed: Cllr Lapper, seconded Cllr Watts, all in favour.**

#### 19/161 FINANCE

- Progress against budget:** The Clerk/RFO presented the report of progress against budget as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019 and advised that current forecast shows an underspend on small grants and S.137 grants, village maintenance, election costs, insurance and training. There were no queries.
- A motion to approve bank reconciliation as at 31<sup>st</sup> October 2019: It was resolved** that the bank reconciliation statement at 31<sup>st</sup> October be approved. **Proposed: Cllr Porrett, seconded Cllr Lawton, all in favour.**
- A motion to approve October 2019 Payments/Cheques:** The list of payments made

and cheques to be signed against October expenditure was presented. There were no queries and **it was resolved** to approve the payments. **Proposed: Cllr Haines, seconded Cllr Porrett, all in favour.**

|  |                            |                  |        |
|--|----------------------------|------------------|--------|
|  | CPRE                       | £36.00           | 300182 |
|  | SSE                        | £281.57          | DD     |
|  | Cressing PCC               | £722.00          | 300183 |
|  | BT                         | £33.41           | DD     |
|  | A & J Lighting             | £1,385.58        | 300184 |
|  | J Adshead-Grant            | £128.00          | 300185 |
|  | C A Marshall               | £412.90          | 300186 |
|  | HMRC                       | £103.20          | 300187 |
|  | Sue Pulfrey - poppy wreath | £18.50           | 300188 |
|  |                            | <b>£3,121.16</b> |        |

- iv. The Clerk/RFO proposed that as no items of high expenditure were anticipated between now and the end of the financial year, £20,000 should be transferred from the Current to Deposit Account where it will receive a small amount of interest whilst remaining easily accessible if required. **A motion** to approve this transfer was put forward. **Proposed: Cllr Haines, seconded: Cllr Lapper, all in favour.**

**Action: Clerk/RFO**

#### 19/162 BUDGET 2020-21

The Clerk/RFO recommended that Cressing Parish Council should seek the General Power of Competence and the Clerk/RFO was asked to provide more information prior to the next meeting.

**Action: Clerk/RFO**

The budget was considered further and it was agreed:

- i. Charities to be supported in 2020/21 will include the Heart Foundation, Cancer/Macmillan Cancer Support and PARC (Play and Resource Centre), all of which have local branches. The Clerk/RFO will reflect in the budget. **Action: Clerk/RFO**  
Essex Dementia Care was also suggested and Cllr Watts will look into whether there is a group for Cressing residents. **Action: Cllr Watts**
- ii. Additional suggestions for highway initiatives were discussed and it was agreed to seek licences to place “no parking” signs on greensward around the parish and reflective bollards at the Polecat Road/B1018 junction. The Clerk/RFO will seek costs. Cost of Speedwatch equipment to be added to budget. **Action: Clerk/RFO**
- iii. Training courses were discussed and an approach will be made to the EALC for some on-site modular training for councillors. The Clerk/RFO highlighted that this will not to replace other training that councillors may require. **Action: Clerk/RFO**
- iv. The Clerk/RFO to obtain costs for bus shelters and benches at locations previously identified. A member of the public advised that his understanding was the Parish Council owned the bus shelter at Polecat Road (Hawbush Green). *Since the meeting the Clerk/ RFO has investigated and records show that ownership was passed to Essex County Council. The Clerk/RFO will contact ECC to clarify the position as it was understood upkeep of bus shelters had been devolved to parish councils.* **Action: Clerk/RFO**

#### 19/163 PLANNING

Cllr Simpson has advised that she does not wish to take up the position of Chairman to the Planning Committee. It was agreed therefore to postpone this appointment until full training had been given to all Councillors on planning. **Action: Clerk/RFO**

#### 19/164 PLANNING

There were no applications determined by Braintree District Council.

**19/165 PLANNING**

**New applications**

- i. 19/00278/TPOCON | Notice of intent to carry out works to tree in a Conservation Area - Cut down an Acer Crimson King tree | Courtneys The Street Crossing Essex CM77 8DQ - This application was noted by Councillors but agreed there were no comments to be made.

**19/166 PLANNING**

**To note applications bordering parish for information and to consider if comments should be made:**

There were no applications to note.

**19/167 PLANNING**

**To note applications withdrawn:**

None advised.

**19/168 PLANNING**

**Appeals received by Braintree District Council:**

None advised.

**19/169 PLANNING**

**To note Enforcement enquiries through Braintree District Council**

The enquiries listed on the Agenda were noted.

**19/170 PLANNING**

- i. B19/02144/OUT– the removal of the earth mound and installation of a footpath on the playing field by Countryside was discussed. The responses received by Cllr Simpson to her questionnaire showed an overwhelming preference for the mound to remain. It was suggested that no further footpath on the playing field should be installed but an approach made to Countryside for them to improve the drainage at the beginning of the existing path at the entrance to the field and to resurface that existing footpath. **Action: Clerk/RFO**
- ii. The Clerk/RFO will contact Countryside's agents accordingly. **Action: Clerk/RFO**

**19/171 S.106**

It was agreed to postpone discussion on this topic until after the planning training being arranged.

**19/172 HIGHWAYS**

Cllr Watts reported on the meeting held with Jasmine Wiles, Local Highways Panel Officer. He advised that he and the Clerk/RFO now had a much better understanding of how the Panel works and what schemes do not need LHP approval where Essex Highways License\* can be sought instead. It appears that some of the applications submitted to Cllr Mitchell have not been passed to the LHP Officer, copies will be forwarded. **Action: Clerk/RFO**

\* White Gates, planting, bollards, benches

Cllr Watts has suggested that future meetings are held to seek guidance on applications to enable quicker progress. These will be arranged as necessary.

No additional locations had been suggested for benches, so these will now be progressed.

**19/173 WEBSITE**

The Clerk/RFO confirmed that no funding would be provided to parish councils to assist in the development of replacement websites following the withdrawal of the Essexinfo.net service.

Cllr Watts and the Clerk/RFO have looked at two alternatives (one created entirely by the Parish Council, the other through a website designer) and it was agreed that it would be more convenient to have the website created by an external provider. The Clerk/RFO will

seek recommendations from other Parish Councils and obtain formal quotations. In the meantime, sources of grant funding will be sought. **It was agreed** to grant delegated powers to Cllr Watts and the Clerk/RFO to progress. **Action: Clerk/RFO and Cllr Watts**

**19/174 PLAYING FIELD AND ENVIRONMENT**

- i. Cllr Haines presented a verbal report. There were no issues. The Chairman advised that he had walked around the playground and was pleased to see that there was no litter around the field nor the children's play area.
- ii. **It was agreed** to display Christmas tree lights on the triangle at the junction of Polecat Road and Church Lane. The date of Sunday 1<sup>st</sup> December was agreed and Cllr Watts will manage. A Christmas tree was suggested for display outside St Barnabas Hall and it was agreed to approach Countryside to sponsor and erect this. **Action: Clerk/RFO**

**19/175 INFORMATION EXCHANGE AND AGENDA ITEMS FOR THE NEXT MEETING**

- i. The Clerk/RFO advised a request had been received from BDC for a letter of confirmation from the Parish Council to support the amendments to the Neighbourhood Plan suggested by the Inspector. Cllr Simpson confirmed that the amendments were in keeping with the Plan and it was agreed to write accordingly. **Action: Clerk/RFO**

**19/176 NEXT PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

The next Parish Council meeting was confirmed for Wednesday 11<sup>th</sup> December 2019 at 7.30pm to be held at St Barnabas, Claud Ince Avenue, Cressing.  
Items for inclusion on the Agenda to be sent to the Parish Clerk/RFO to be received no later than 12 noon on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2019.

**19/177 The Chairman declared the public part of the Parish Council Meeting closed at 9.10pm to convene a closed Parish Council Meeting. All Councillors remained.**

Under Standing Order 3.w, a motion was proposed to extend the meeting if the closed section could not be completed within 20 minutes. **It was agreed** to extend if necessary. **Proposed: Cllr Lawton, seconded: Cllr Lapper, all in favour.**

**19/178 VILLAGE HANDYMAN**

**Motion:** to proposed that the post of Village Handyman be created. **Proposed: Cllr Porrett, seconded: Cllr Haines, all in favour. Action: Clerk/RFO & Cllr Watts**

**19/179 PARISH CLERK/RFO**

**Motion:** to propose that the Clerk/RFO's employment with Cressing Parish Council should be made permanent. **Proposed: Cllr Lawton, seconded: Cllr Watts, all in favour.** The Clerk/RFO was asked to prepare the standard contract for signature by the Employment Committee. **Action: Clerk/RFO**

**Motion:** to propose the Clerk/RFO's working hours be increased to 17 hours per week (annualized and paid monthly) with effect from 13<sup>th</sup> November 2019. **Proposed: Cllr Porrett, seconded: Cllr Haines, all in favour.**

**Motion:** to increase the Clerk/RFO's hourly rate in accordance with the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) guidance. **Proposed: Cllr Lawton, seconded: Cllr Watts, all in favour.**

**Motion:** to agree a one-off payment to the Clerk/RFO in respect of additional hours worked. **Action: Clerk/RFO**

**19/180 CLOSE MEETING**

The Chairman declared the closed Parish Council Meeting closed at 10.10 pm.