

**Minutes of the Clavering Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> April 2014  
at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.**

The Council met at 7.15pm In Camera to discuss the appointment of the New Clerk  
Present: Councillors Stephanie Gill (Chairman), Richard Carter, Michael Patmore,  
Stuart Boardman,  
Jenny Allan, Ron Couchman, Brian Barrow.

The Employment Committee presented a report and advised that they had offered the post to Mr. Kevin B. Money who has accepted it. The Employment Committee asked the Council to ratify this action to enable the relative Employment contract to be signed with a start date of 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014. There will be a probationary period of 13 weeks. Mr. Money, though not an experienced clerk has already taken courses at EALC, and taking this into consideration, will start at SCP 16. (Currently £8.630p) The hours contracted are 9 hours per week. The salary shall be paid monthly, which equates to 39 hours per calendar month. Home office allowance currently £18pm. Ratification: Proposed Clr Carter. Seconded Clr .Barrow - F6 Ab 1.

Mr. Money has already registered to take an intensive CiLCA Course in August this year.

The Employment Committee further recommended, as this is Professional Development, despite his registering for the course before the date of agreed employment by Clavering Parish Council, that the Council will fund 50% of this course charge. Proposed: Cllr Gill. Seconded: Cllr Boardman F5 Ab. 2

It was confirmed to councillors that the Clerk's contract provides that, in the event that the contract is terminated, any course cost paid for by the Council in the previous twelve months will be reimbursed to the Council.

Report to be filed with official minutes

Clr Couchman asked that a job description be agreed for the Clerk. Clr. Boardman advised that there is one, which is appended to the contract, which follows NALC guidelines and which formed part of previous clerks' contracts. It was then ascertained that Clr Couchman was referring to the 'tasks' of the Clerk and it was agreed that this would be an item for discussion at a later date.

The meeting was then opened to the public at 7.30pm  
District Councillor Edward Oliver (UDC) and three members of the public were in attendance

1. There were no public announcements. The Chairman formally welcomed the new Clerk to his position.

**Apologies for absence**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mark Wilkinson (Vice Chairman) – holiday, Peter Smith - holiday and Rebecca Stanford – holiday.

**Declaration of Interest**

There were no declarations of Disclosure Pecuniary Interests

**2. PUBLIC FORUM**

The pavement at Blacksmiths Corner gives the appearance of being urbanized and not rural. The Parish Council was asked if there were any funds for plants to be planted so that they trail over the vertical slabs. The Parish Council informed the public that it did not own that part of Blacksmiths Corner. The land is believed to be owned by Mr Noble. The Parish Council also noted that the paving slabs, which had been put in by Essex County Council, were placed at an angle

Another question from the Public was to ask if the Planning Agenda item could be moved to nearer the top of the agenda, the Chairman and Clerk agreed to look at this. The member of the public also brought to the council's attention that there is one part footpath on the Pelham Road that causes concern. The hedgerow is kept in a poor condition and brambles are encroaching onto the pavement and it was asked if the Highways Rangers be asked to attend to this.

**3. MINUTES OF LAST MEETING**

Clr. Allan requested four amendments to her name being spelt incorrectly; They were on page 884 paragraph 1, page 885 paragraph 5, paragraph 887, paragraph 15 and page 888, paragraph 24 that her name be spelt correctly to be spelt ALLAN.

After the Chairman made these alterations, the minutes were agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record. Proposed by Clr. Carter and Seconded by Clr. Allan.

**4. PROPOSED BUS SHELTER**

Mr Howland sent his apologies via Clr. Couchman and Clr. Couchman informed the Council he had no further information. The Chairman advised the Council she had spoken with Mr Arnold Hitchcock who stated that the strip of land in front of his hedging and fence belonged to Highways. This is borne out by a letter from UDC recently received by the Council regarding an enforcement issue on said land. Mr Hitchcock asked that the exit sight line be considered when looking at a site for the shelter.

**5. BRIDGE AT COLEHILLS CLOSE**

Clr. Carter informed the Council that the bridge has been removed, however, the two brick pillars are still in place. The brick structure is insecure and is only a brick shell. The safety of the public on the Blacksmiths Corner side is ok, while the Lower Way side is taped off so as the public cannot access the river from a raised height. Clr. Carter also thought of blocking off the bridge with exterior plywood, however, this would look unsightly. Fresh tapes would be put in place. After discussion, the Councillors agreed to place this item on the May Agenda but to ask Peter Hockley to submit an estimate and it was agreed to ratify quotes currently sought from F Hicks to remove the

bricks and plinths on both sides and reinstate the banks. This was proposed by Clr. Barrow and seconded by Clr. Allan and was carried unanimously. However, Clr. Couchman asked that we obtain 3 quotes, if possible.

## **6. COMMUNITY ASSET REGISTER**

The Chairman informed the Council that she had already started on completing the forms.

### FOX AND HOUNDS PH

We are not required to advise the owners - Admiral Taverns. This is carried out by Uttlesford.

### UPPER HILL GREEN

The Chairman was asked to include the postcode (which is CB11 4QS) and the registration number of the Green. After a lengthy discussion regarding Upper Hill Green, it was agreed that the Chairman holds back from sending in the form until further information from the Land Registry kept by Cllr. Stanford is made available. The Council agreed that the Fox and Hounds PH document goes through to the appropriate authority - (UDC)

## **7. AGENDA AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR ANNUAL PARISH MEETING ON 28<sup>TH</sup> APRIL, 2014**

The Chairman confirmed that she had received letters from Clr. Couchman. The Chairman clarified her position and advised Clr. Couchman that she recalls the question being put forward in a signed letter and that Mrs Washington has advised her that she has no concerns with the manner in which her question was dealt with at the Annual Parish Meeting in 2013. She reminded Clr. Couchman that the Council's previous Clerk had four year's parish council clerking experience before joining Clavering. The Chairman also stated that the Annual Parish Meeting Agenda is an open forum and the public can ask any questions whatsoever. Clr. Couchman then asked for prior questions to go on the Agenda. This was not approved, as the Agenda states that any questions from the public can be asked. Clr. Carter asked the Clerk, if the draft minutes could be sent out early, as in previous years they were not sent out until 2 weeks before the next Annual Parish Meeting (some 1 year later). The Clerk and the Chairman agreed that this will be done. Clr. Patmore asked if all Councillors could sit altogether. The Chairman advised that all Councillors should sit as a group but could opt to sit with the public. Clr. Boardman suggested that at the Annual Parish Meeting that the tables be laid in a horseshoe fashion so that the Councillors can communicate with the public. This was all agreed by the Councillors.

## **8. COUNCILLOR VACANCY UPDATE**

To date, no person, or persons have come forward to fill the vacancy.

## **9. FINANCE**

In the absence of the RFO Clr. Jenny Allan gave the financial report (which is attached to these minutes)

She first started by saying that there was an overpayment of £545.28 to HMRC and that the RFO has claimed this money back. Reason for this not yet known.

Regarding the Asset Register, the insurance figures need to be a "Year end" figure not a 'start of the year'.

The Parish Council needs to determine whether the Easement VAT refunds will go into a separate pot and not back to Easements.

Reserves show that the Council under-spent by £2063.32 this amount is largely due to savings coming from Trees at £1000.00 and repairs & seat of £225.00

### Cheque Requests

<u>cheque no</u>	<u>payee</u>	<u>for</u>	<u>inv no</u>	<u>net</u>	<u>VAT</u>	<u>total paid</u>
1351	EALC Traning day K Money	£67.00	4380	£67.00	£ -	£67.00
1352	Jackie Dean expenses and 57 pence	£183.60	10/02/2014	£183.60	£ -	£183.60
1353	Clavering Care	£100.00				£100.00
1354	CAB	£50.00				£50.00
					Total	£400.60
31/03/2014	Natwest Balance	£2,771.37			after cheques	£2,672.17
	cheques outstanding	£99.20			balance	£2,271.57

All be signed and sent off. Agreed by Councillors.

The Chair advised that the Clerk and RFO are in contact with each other to finalise payroll details concerning the Clerk's April salary payment, which would be paid in accordance with his contract.

Clr Couchman then presented a document for inspection to show that the HMRC overpayment mentioned was not made when he was RFO as he believed this was the intimation of the Financial Report. The Chair reiterated strongly that the report made no such claim; it is believed to date back many years and has only come to light when the RFO queried a possible overpayment for this Financial Year; the Council is waiting on formal notification by letter from HMRC with explanations.

## **10. REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS**

### **ALLOTMENTS**

Clr. Patmore informed the Council that he had 2 new allotment owners who have paid up to date.

One couple have still not paid, he has left a note to say they are well overdue. All other allotment holders are up to date.

**VILLAGE HALL**

Clr. Boardman had nothing to report. Clr Couchman reminded the Council of the Easter Art Show. In response to a question, the Chairman confirmed she had not received any correspondence regarding parking on Upper Hill Green for this.

**JUBILEE FIELD**

Clr. Jenny Allan informed the Council that Charley Balaam would speak at the Annual Parish Meeting.

There will also be a 'Fun Day' on 18<sup>th</sup> May 2014.

The Councillors then discussed the Waymarkers in Jubilee Field; these have been removed to cut the grass, but have not been replaced. Clr Wilkinson has already contacted Essex County Council to request they accompany him & inform him as to the right place to replace them. After conflicting discussion, it was agreed that a representative from Jubilee Field be invited to accompany Essex County Council and Clr. Wilkinson in replacing the markers in the right positions.

**District Clr. Oliver** informed the Council that there are no more larger sites to be developed in Clavering as the District Council has voted to adopt a Local Plan

Clr. Couchman informed the Council that the War Memorial is now listed, which was a suggestion when the renovation grant was given over.

Clr Couchman advised the Chairman that he is not a Council Representative at the Village Police Meetings facilitated by the Council. The Chairman had also attended the Police Meeting on 12<sup>th</sup> March and wished to give a report as she had been subsequently contacted by a villager who had requested that the Parish Council contact the Police, and the District Councillor, amongst others, given the shed and garage burglaries that had taken place later in the same week. Only 13 villagers had been in attendance, despite advertising in the Parish Newsletter, Clavering Facebook page, and many signs put up around the village. At the meeting the police had advised on security and also products were on sale, such as shed alarms, door alarms, etc. The Chairman asked what more should we be doing? Clr Allan suggested that we consider inviting the Police to speak at a meeting, or the next APM.

**11. CLERK'S REPORT AND CORRESPONDENCE**

These were passed to all Councillors under a separate cover and are attached to the minutes.

**BEST KEPT VILLAGE**

Litter Pick is 26<sup>th</sup> April 10am. Clr. Couchman agreed to clean up the telephone boxes and signs and also to paint the Parish Notice Board with 'Sadolin'

Clr. Barrow agreed to clean inside the bus shelter.

**12. RISK ASSESSMENT BOOK**

The Clerk omitted to bring the book along but assured all Councillors, that the following entry would be inserted into the book as soon as possible. 1<sup>st</sup> April 2014 "Colehills Bridge, removed."

### **13. PLANNING**

Decisions:

UTT/13/3557/DRO Jubilee Works – Details following outline permission for 23 dwellings. Refused

UTT/14/0133/AV Jubilee Works. Permission for Hoarding signs, flags and V Boards. Refused

Clr. Carter asked District Councillor Oliver to explain “what happens next”?

Councillor Oliver informed the Council that Weston Homes are going to Appeal on the houses and the signs & “V” boards will have to go to the UDC Enforcement Officer to enforce removal.

UTT/0272/HHF Little Paddocks Clatterbury Road – Approved with conditions  
For Consultation:

UTT/14/0157/FUI Rossie Middle Street – Councillors had responded to the Chair by mail or letter due to cut off date - No Comment

UTT/13/2118/HHF Brooklyn Stortford Road – No Comment

A report on the time given to the Council by UDC to respond to planning applications had been circulated by Clr Couchman prior to the meeting. The Clerk informed the Council he had made discreet phone enquiries with UDC Planning. On a case by case basis, the Council may ask for the response deadline to be extended, but this decision rests with the Case Officer and is governed by his/her workload. A maximum of 2 days would possibly be granted. The Chair confirmed that she spoken with a Planning Officer and received the same information.

### **14. PUBLIC MEETING TO BE FACILITATED BY PARISH COUNCIL**

The Councillors are still concerned that the yellow lines in Stortford Road have still not been completed so a meeting cannot be called. This Agenda item is carried forward to the May meeting.

The Chairman agreed to send a report to the Stortford Road residents and keeping them more informed.

### **15. TELEPHONE BOX**

Clr. Patmore asked that if someone wants to take the telephone box away, then to let them do so; however, the Chairman stated that the History Group may have an interest in the telephone box. All Councillors agreed that no one has come forward to help with any refurbishment to the telephone box and no one has come forward to run anything out of it.

Clr. Patmore proposed to sell the telephone box which is sited in Skeins Way. Clr. Barrow as seconder. However no vote was taken as Clr Couchman stated he thought the original purchase contract precludes sale The Clerk is to investigate the legality of selling the telephone box and he also awaits the contract from Clr. Couchman, a copy of which is to be passed to the Chair also. It was also noted that these phone boxes could fetch upwards of £1,000 on eBay. Clr. Allan called for a full vote of all councillors at next meeting on this.

**16. INSURANCE RENEWAL JUNE 2014**

Clr. Boardman was still awaiting figures from the insurance companies and asked for this to be carried forward to the May Agenda.

**At 9.30pm it was agreed to continue the business of the Council.**

**17. HIGHWAYS RANGERS TASKS**

Village signs at entry points to be cleaned

Between Bower House and Hill Green, the grass needs removing as is encroaching on the pavement. Also there is gravel spilling onto the pavement from driveways.

Trimming of hedges encroaching on footpath along the Pelham Road from junction with Church to Blacksmiths Corner

The Clerk was asked to send a note to the Highways Rangers, when tasks completed thanking them for their work.

**18. ECC LIBRARY SERVICES**

The Council had received an email from Essex County Council Library Services informing them that the service would continue for another year. This was greeted with delight from all Councillors.

**19. AFFINITY WATER AND STICKLING GREEN**

The Chairman informed the Councillors this was an Agenda item as she wished it recorded that initial paperwork from Affinity Water indicated that the main water pipes to be replaced were under the road, so the Council had not been made aware of digging to take place on that Village Green as had been the case with Starlings Green. The pipes actually are under the Green, the work has been completed and the Green made good.

**20. ITEMS FOR NEXT AGENDA**

Review of new Financial Regulations, for decision at June meeting.

Insurance Renewal

Discussion on Blacksmiths Corner and planting where the path has been widened.

Council agreed that they wished for Chair to first speak with Mr Noble before any Council discussion takes place.

Review of grass cutting and whether work is being executed per tender. – Clerk to make map accompanying tender available.

In response to a question, the Clerk confirmed that, per advice given on his training day, a Clerk is responsible for determining the Agenda, and does so with reference to the Chairman. The Chairman confirmed she had been told the same on her training courses.

The Chairman requested that a Special Meeting be called either at the close of the Annual Parish Meeting, or before, for the Council to respond to the consultation on a draft transparency code for parish council with a turnover not exceeding £25000: The deadline is 9<sup>th</sup> May. Clr. Couchman suggested that Councillors pass their comments to the Clerk by email or letter and it was agreed that the Clerk, working with the Chairman, would collate these for submission.

**21. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

Monday 12<sup>th</sup> May 2014 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Annual Parish Meeting 28<sup>th</sup> April 2014 8pm in the Village Hall

There being no other business the meeting was closed at 9.50pm

Signed .....Chairman : Date .....

Stephanie M. Gill