

Minutes of the Clavering Parish Council meeting held on Monday 14th. July 2014 at 7.15pm in the Village Hall

Present - Cllrs: Stephanie Gill (Chairman), Mark Wilkinson (Vice-Chairman), Richard Carter, Jenny Allan, Peter Smith, Mike Patmore, Stuart Boardman, Brian Barrow, Ron Couchman,

The Council met at 7.15pm In Camera to discuss the full appointment of the New Clerk after a probationary period of 13 weeks

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

1. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting

2. Apologises for Absence

There were Apologises for Absence from Cllr. Stanford who was on holiday

3. Declaration of Interest

Cllr. Wilkinson declared a pecuniary interest in Brices Farm planning application.
Cllrs. Boardman, Allan and Gill all declared a non-pecuniary interest in Brices Farm planning application

Cllr. Carter declared in a non-pecuniary interest, if discussed, in Gladman Housing Development

Cllrs. Allan and Gill declared a pecuniary interest in Jubilee Field as trustees

4. Public Forum

The majority of the public were there to discuss the forth coming major housing development in Pelham Road, Clavering. The Chairman informed the public that the Councillors would not enter into any discussion with the public as this development has not formally been applied to Uttlesford District Council. However, the public were strongly against this development and was asking the Parish Council to hold a public meeting. The Clerk suggested that the public either email or send the letter to him direct so that a file can be set up for future reference.

District Councillor Oliver stated that if a public meeting was held and Gladman Developments knew of this meeting, they may attend and be in a position to neutralise any public arguments.

The public also asked whether the footpaths can be cut back near Pond Cottage as the hedges are now close to the road. A member of the public also brought to the attention of the Council, the over growth hedges in Pelham Road which had resulted in a car accident today, and suggested the hedges needed a severe cut back.

5. To approve the last minutes of Clavering Parish Council

Cllr Couchman requested his name be deleted from page 904, section 3.

The minutes were then agreed and signed by the Chairman as a true record.

6. Planning Applications

At this point, Cllrs Wilkinson, Allan, Gill and Boardman left the meeting.

UTT/14/1747/PDE – Brices Farm Butts Green Valance Road Clavering
Single storey extension – extending 1.5m from rear wall, 2.4m height to ridge & 4.2m to eaves – No objections

At this point Cllrs Wilkinson, Allan, Gill and Boardman returned to the meeting.

UTT/14/1956/TPO – The Bury Middle Street Clavering
Fell 2 Beech and reduce crown on 1 Beech – No objections

Decisions made by UDC:

UTT/14/1242/HHF – Mill End House Langley Road Clavering

Approved with conditions

UTT/14/1038/FUL – Butts Green Farm Butts Green Clavering

Refused – 17th. June 2014

UTT/14/1267/LB – Mill End House Mill End CB11 4RP

Approve with conditions

UTT/14/1355/HHF – 1 Barlee Close Clavering CB11 4SN

Approve with conditions

UTT/14/1468/CLE – The Lodge Pelham Road

Approve Certificate of Lawfulness

Hearing of the Jubilee Works

Cllr Gill reported the hearing she had attended of the Jubilee Works site

She informed the Council that this was an informal format i.e. herself and other attendees were able to raise their hands and ask questions, make comments, where relevant as allowed by the inspector.

The position of the affordable housing and the lack of lift for the effective for the three storey affordable block was the reason for UDC's refusal and our original comments had made reference to this, so she was able to speak on behalf of the Council. She reiterated that the Parish Councils housing surveys makes reference to one bedroom dwellings. Others who attended the hearing also commented that the lack of a lift was discrimination. She also made comment as the Counsel for Western Homes indicated that the previous hearing included a housing layout accepted by the previous inspector and which they deemed relevant to the discussion. In fact as understood by UDC, that hearing related to outline permission for up to 24 dwellings on a to be defunct brown fill site and not for any site layout plans.

She also visited the site with the inspector and others and answered questions on the residential housings in the vicinity, cutting back of hedgerow on one boundary known hair-streak moth that develops in the immediate vicinity on dead elms, footpath, and whom she understood to be the owners of the adjoining field.

Cllr Couchman then asked if he could make a point regarding the hearing. He stated that he attended the hearing as a resident of Clavering Parish. On a point of order the Chairman asked Cllr Couchman if he were making a comment as a parishioner, in which case this should have been at the public forum. Cllr Couchman then stated he had attended the hearing as a councillor and parishioner. He continued, stating that having attended several appeals over the years in various capacities, this one struck him as unusual. On one side 2 low paid Council inexperienced officers and clearly having had little training presenting arguments, on the other side 3 lawyers at least one was a barrister.

Cllr Gill then explained to Cllr Couchman that the hearing followed that same format as the previous Inspectorate Hearing for the Jubilee Works, and that it was unfortunate that he had arrived 30 minutes after the start of the hearing and not stayed to the end.

Whilst Cllr Couchman hopes the inspector will support the Parish Council, it seems little prospect. All this shows is that our Parish Council needs to improve its response and need to get professional advice and to get as many local people involved willing to write letters of objections, attending hearings on mass.

Cllr Couchman stressed that we must work on the basis that all future large developments will be approved in line with Government policies unless powerful points of objections can be found.

7. Tender for Skeins Way Telephone Box

The Clerk informed the Council that the three names that Mrs Cooper had supplied to the Clerk only two had formally supplied a tender.

Cllr Couchman stated that in the past the Council had been caught out by taking the cheaper quote. The Clerk read the two quotations that had been received and the pricing accordingly.

The first quotation was from Paul Williams. He fully explained the tender requirements and his price was Materials £350 – Labour £780 = £1130.00p

The second quotation was from Mike Smith. He too fully explained the tender requirements and his price was Labour £740 – Material (+/- 10%) £235 = £975.00p

After careful consideration and discussion, Cllr Carter proposed and Cllr Allan seconded that the Council accept the quotation from Mr Mike Smith of Home & Property Service. **F5, AB2, AG2.**

It was then agreed that the Clerk should make contact with Mr Smith to agree a starting time which hopefully will be in August. It was also agreed that further quotes would be sought at a later date for the construction of the shelving was required for the box to be an Information box.

8. Report from RFO

In the absence of Cllr Stanford, Cllr Allan gave the RFO report.

Cllr Allan stated that the ELAC course in the new financial regulations is on Wednesday 16th July 2014. Cllr Gill stated that as Cllr Stanford was on holiday, she would attend the course and ask permission from the Councillors for her to attend. This decision was carried unanimously.

Cllr Allan suggested that the new financial regulations review should be deferred until Cllr Gill has been on the course.

Cllr Gill (on behalf of Cllr Stanford) read out a letter dated 8th July 2014 to Cllr Couchman. She read:

Dear Ron,

I received your letter dated 18th June on the 23rd June. I have today taken advice from Mr Michael Perry as the letter was not addressed to the Council, but to me as an individual Councillor.

He has advised me to get the Council to respond.

Points to note:

The receipts and payments document is a Format Mr Howard uses, and you have therefore received previously from him, but was not needed or supplied this financial year.

Under advice, the Clerk's salary information would normally be removed, but as the Annual Return has been submitted and we only have one employee that information has not been redacted.

You have already received the front copy of the cash book before the April meeting. The Clerk will purchase a memory stick to pass on the electronic version, but as you have no computer, I have also asked him to print out paper copies.

All emails I have still on my own system have been forwarded to the Clerk for printing. You have already received the official auditor correspondence both before the April meeting and the final report circulated when I received it on the 23rd June. I have informed Mr Howard of your request as a matter of courtesy.

I have spent about two hours of my own time on this matter which unfortunately is not chargeable. The maximum allowed is eighteen hours. Under the rules no amount is chargeable for any copies made or time spent unless the value exceeds £450, so I am unable to pass on any costs made by the Council. The Clerk's time spent on this matter will be charged as overtime and as such an additional cost to the Parish taxpayers.

The responses will be with you by the 21st July 2014.

Cllr Couchman replied that as an elected member of the Parish Council, he should be able to get copies of financial documents which are by now freely available to anyone. Most of which have been circulated as a matter of course to members for a least 10 years. As to any costs involved, they are down to the individual who has impeded his request for the information.

The Chairman asked Cllr Couchman if he had requested to inspect and view the accounts as per the notice displayed on the Parish Notice Board within the time frame stated as she had previously understood from the RFO that he had not, but he had requested financial papers and reports already circulated to the Council. He had then sent forward a request under the Freedom of Information Act in his capacity as a parishioner. Cllr Couchman stated he thought he had asked to inspect and view the paperwork in the time frame. As the RFO was not present to answer for herself, the Chairman announced that this point would have to be left.

Cllr Couchman stated that he did not believe the Parish Accounts could be inspected at the home of the RFO.

Cllr Boardman pointed out that any request under the Freedom of Information Act must be dealt with in the correct manner as regards the Council's responsibilities

and is outside the normal week-to-week work of the Clerk and will accrue as overtime.

Cheque Request
Chq.

No.	Payee	For	Inv. No.	Nett	VAT	Total Pd
1368	Post Office (HMRC)	£201.80				£201.80
1369	Kevin Money (Expenses)	£101.13	15.06		£12.95	£101.13
1370	Kevin Money (Salary)	£287.37				£287.37
1371	RCCE	£66.00	01.06	£55.00	£11.00	£ 66.00
1372	Carr & Birchir Skips Ltd	£222.00	13.07	£185.00	£37.00	£222.00
					Total:	£878.30

30.05.14	NatWest Balance	£8,249.21	after Cheques	£7,779.27
	Cheques outstanding	£ 469.94	Balance	£6,900.97
	1349,1353,1354,1362,1363,1364,1365			

Cheques proposed by Cllr Gill, seconded by Cllr Barrow, **carried unanimously.**

9. Cole Hills Bridge Tender

Cllr Wilkinson informed the Council that only one tender had been received and this was from Hicks & Co., but sent by text message. The tender was to demolish both sides of the bridge, to infill the hole with topsoil and seed. Cllr Allan said that the bridge must be made safe as the summer was upon us and she proposed that Cllr Wilkinson instructs FH Hicks & Co to carry out the demolition and removal of both brick piers at Cole Hills Bridge for a cost not exceeding £500 + VAT. This was seconded by Cllr Boardman. **F8, AG0, AB1.**

10. Final Four of the Essex Village of the Year 2014

The Chairman had received a call from RCCE who wished to meet with a number of community representatives on 24th June for final judgement of this. A presentation was put together, given by the Chairman and Peter Walters, and there were representatives from the Jubilee Field, Village Hall, Countryside Group, Parish Council telephone box project, plus primary and school age children – all of whom answered questions posed by the judges. The judges were then taken to see the historic centre of the village and the hall and playing fields, visiting also the Over 60's Club.

Cllrs Wilkinson and Allan then attended the RCCE AGM on July 9th. It was announced that Clavering had won Best Kept Village (Class 3) for 2014 and were received £150. Village of the Year results were: 3rd Place shared by Canewdon and Debden, 2nd Place Great Maplestead. 1st Place Clavering. An award of £500 was received and the village will feature in the August edition of Essex Life, the Chair thanked all those who had contributed to showing the judges that Clavering was a special village where organisations and businesses supported each other.

The Chair has received requests from the media for her give over comments/be quoted. Standing Orders do not permit this

26. Relations with the press/media

- a) All requests from the press or other media for an oral or written statement or comment from the Council shall be processed in accordance with the Council's policy in respect of dealing with the press and/or other media.
- b) In accordance with the Council's policy in respect to dealing with the press and/or other media, councillors shall not, in their official capacity, provide oral or written statements or written articles to the press or other media.

It was proposed by Cllr Carter, seconded by Cllr Allan that the standing order 26 is suspended only for matters relating to the Essex Village of the Year /Best Kept Village 2014 and that the Chairman may provide such statements or written articles. **Agreed unanimously.**

It was further agreed that the Parish Council look to distributing the award money received between the village community causes and this would be determined at the September meeting.

11. **RBL Bench**

Cllr Gill reported that it has now been agreed that the bench will be sited on the shops land, with the Parish Council to maintain it, and the bench will be in place by 11.11.2014.

12. Representatives Report

Allotments Report

Cllr Patmore reported that the allotments were OK except that the spare land is in a mess. He also asked Mr. Balaam to look at the area and advise further. He also had received a complaint about the use of bonfires and this is being looked into and rectified. Cllr Patmore informed the Council that this issue of bonfires was an isolated case and all allotment holders have been informed of this issue. He confirmed to the Chairman in response to her question that bonfires are not dealt with in the allotment rules.

Village Hall Report

Cllr Couchman had nothing to report.

Jubilee Field Report

Cllr Allan informed the Council that the committee welcomed two new Trustees. Alan Welch provided a notice board for the football pavilion; a tree survey is to take place in Simons' wood; 2 windows in the pavilion were replaced after vandalism; The cake stall at the village fete raised £268; the Jubilee Field Committee are looking to have a fund raising event each quarter; to aid cash flow the Tennis and Bowls clubs will be charged a ground rent equivalent to their share of the insurance and grass cutting.

District Councillors Report

District Councillor Oliver stated that Gladman had met with the UDC Officers. There is still an issue with the gypsies at Herb Farm but this is being raised at the next UDC meeting.

13. Clerks Report and Correspondence

The last months schedule was passed to the Councillors. Cllr Couchman volunteered to cut with a bow saw the cherry tree at Stickling Green referred to by Mr & Mrs Weston as anyone working on the Green must have the correct chainsaw Health & Safety certificate. Clerk to advise Mr & Mrs Weston. Andrew Scullion of Essex Passenger Liaison has advised that he hopes to meet with the Parish Council in August to discuss the bus shelter siting to ensure it is in place by September. Colin Howland to be asked to attend the meeting also.

14. Grass Cutting

Cllr Carter had spoken to Paul Abrahams. The grass has been strimmed in front of the Chapel on Hill Green and around the posts in front of Horse Pond. The area behind the pump on Hill Green has been cut back to the boundary. The Councillors were concerned about how many times Cllr Carter has to speak to Paul Abrahams and a concern was again raised about taking a cheaper tender.

**At 9.30pm in was agreed to continue the business of the Council.
Cllrs. Wilkinson and Boardman left the meeting**

15. Risk Assessment Book

Three insertions were placed into the book. Cllr Gill inserted that the Parish Notice Board hinge was broken as the wind caught it whilst she was inserting this month's agenda. Cllr Carter was asked to look at it and to mend if possible. Cllr Carter inserted that the Dick Ball Meadow Gate needed to be cleaned and redecorated. It badly needs rubbing down and coating with wood preservatives. It was suggested that three quotes be obtained for the refurbishment. Cllr Couchman inserted that the foot bridge over ditch over footpath 5 was broken. He requests the Parish Clerk notifies ECC Highways Department.

16. Items for next Agenda

Planning
Review of new Financial Regulations ELAC
Distribution of prize money from RCCE
Bus shelter and siting
Salt box
Parking at Clavering School

17. Date of next meeting

As the Council do not normally meet in August, and given the requests for a Public Meeting over the proposed development of 51 houses, the Chairman asked whether councillors felt that the Parish Council should facilitate a meeting. It was agreed the Chairman would book Monday 11th August and this be announced in the Newsletter.

Date of next FULL Council meeting Monday 8th. September 2014 at 7.30pm in the village hall

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 10.15pm

SignedChairman : Date
Stephanie M. Gill