

## Minutes of the Clavering Parish Council meeting held on Monday 9<sup>th</sup>. November 2015 at 7.30pm in the Clavering Village Hall

Present – Cllrs S. Gill (Chairman), B. Barrow, R. Couchman, M. Patmore, R. Carter, L. Williams, R. Clayton, S. Boardman and R. Stanford

Also present District Councillor E. Oliver and 9 Parishioners

1. Cllr Gill welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked Cllr Stanford for standing in for her whilst she was on holiday. She also commended the Bonfire Committee for their stupendous village effort the previous night which had also been attended by those from neighbouring villages. She apologised that the Parish Website was out of date as Cllr Boardman's hand operation was taking a longer than expected recovery period; she apologised that her absence had meant the Parish Council October Newsletter was not published.

2. **Apologies for absence:** None

3. **Declaration of Interest**

To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary, Pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests relating to items on the agenda.

Cllr Carter declared an interest in the planning application for Oxleys Close

Cllr Stanford declared an interest in planning application for Deers Green.

Cllr Gill declared a pecuniary interest in the Jubilee Field as a Trustee

4. **Public Participation Session**

The Chairman invited questions and observations from members of the public present.

A resident mentioned that after the grass cutting at Stickling Green the grass was just laying about and had not been baled. It was suggested to the Council to obtain estimates from various residents in the village who have the right equipment to do the job properly next year.

It was mentioned that Hands off Clavering is "as ready as ever" with the forthcoming appeal hearing at UDC. HOC has nearly reached its projected figure for fundraising but will not stop fundraising. Cllr Couchman registered his appreciation from the Parish Council to HOC.

Another resident read out a statement regarding the Jubilee Field. It read that the Jubilee Field Committee (JFC) appreciate Cllrs Couchman and Boardman raising the issue of tree maintenance costs in Simon Wood and for speaking with the committee as the Parish Council representatives over the past 18 months. The JFC made a presentation to the annual Parish meeting in April 2014 regarding the set up and the funding challenges the JFC faces. As part of the presentation the JFC asked if the PC could consider helping to find a long term sustainable solution to the funding of the basic costs that are required to keep the field open. Over the past 18 months the JFC have met with and supplied Cllrs Couchman and Boardman with much information on the JFC's finances including the current liability relating to tree safety work. In this regard the JFC was disappointed that they have only mentioned £230 in the motion tonight when the cheapest quote for the remaining tree work required is £3,726. There also appears to be some confusion regarding the specific trees mentioned in the proposal as they were the simplest to be dealt with and have already been attended to. However there are many other trees that need significant attention that are beyond the scope of volunteers and the JFC would be grateful for any contribution that the PC are able to make.

Another resident raised the issue of grass cutting generally. He stated that although the grass has been cut this autumn it has not been baled and removed as he thought the contractor did not have the right equipment. He went on to say that he thought a more frequent cutting would result in vigorous regrowth and hence greater nitrification which is detrimental to wild flowers. It would also result in extinction of orchids. The best option in this situation would be to mow by flail annually now and allow the evenly spread cuttings to rot on site. This spreads the nutrient load evenly, keeping it to a minimum.

Another resident mentioned about the forthcoming annual Carol singing event being held on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup>. December. She asked whether Cllr Gill would contact the vicar. Mrs Ramuz, again at her own expense, will be supplying the mulled wine.

Another resident said that it had come to his attention, as a member of the cricket club that tedious rumours and remarks which seem to originate from the Parish Council exist concerning the outfield mower that the PC generously bought using easement money. When the PC agreed to buy these in January 2013 the minutes showed that the mowers were donated to the cricket club. There was no other stipulation. He could not see any other stipulations on other assets bought with easement money. Each year the cricket club volunteers mow Upper Hill Green (approx. 25 times). This keeps the green looking neat and tidy and as the "Best Essex Village" committee said, it was a credit to the village. Those 25 cuts per year are done "free of charge". A few years ago when the old gang mowers broke the cricket club ended up getting a contractor to cut it, which the

cricket club paid for, as a one-off it cost £150. Now if it is done on a regular basis the cost would be about £120. In 3 years the costs the PC has saved, by the cricket club cutting the grass, is substantial.

**5. To approve the Minutes of the meeting of Clavering Parish Council**

To receive and agree the minutes of the extra meeting held on Monday 13<sup>th</sup>. July 2015  
These minutes were proposed by Cllr Carter and seconded by Cllr Gill **F4 Ab1 Ag0**

**6. To approve the Minutes of the meeting of Clavering Parish Council**

To receive and agree the minutes of the extra meeting held on Monday 10<sup>th</sup>. August 2015  
These minutes were proposed by Cllr Carter and seconded by Cllr Patmore **F4 Ab0 Ag0**

**7. To approve the Minutes of the meeting of Clavering Parish Council**

To receive and agree the minutes of the meeting held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup>. September 2015  
These minutes were proposed by Cllr Carter and seconded by Cllr Gill **F5 Ab0 Ag0**

**8. To approve the “In-Camera Minutes” of the meeting of Clavering Parish Council**

To receive and agree the minutes of the “In-camera” meeting held on Monday 14<sup>th</sup>. September 2015  
These minutes were proposed by Cllr Gill and seconded by Cllr Barrow **F4 Ab0 Ag0**

**9. To approve the Minutes of the meeting of Clavering Parish Council**

To receive and agree the minutes of the last meeting held on Monday 12<sup>th</sup>. October 2015  
These minutes were proposed by Cllr Stanford and seconded by Cllr Carter **F5 Ab0 Ag0**

**10. Clerk’s report**

The Clerk brought to the attention of the Councillors an email he had received from Philip Curry requesting to plant 2 sapling maple trees on the north side of the green (i.e. to the north of the road) in Sticking Green. After a discussion the Councillors decided to reply to Mr. Curry thanking him but stating the position of the sapling trees on Stickling Green was not the right place but the Councillors would look at an alternative siting. The Carol Singing will this year be on 22.12.15 at 6.30pm at the Cricket Pavilion and the Walden Buskers had already been booked.

The Clerk asked if Councillors could attend the Gladman inquiry from 10.11.15. Cllr Carter volunteered for 11.11 and 12.11.15. Cllr Stanford for 12.11 and 13.11.15. Cllr Couchman for 17.11. and 18.11.15. Cllr Barrow for 13.11.15. Cllr Williams planned to be present each day bar 18.11.15.

The Clerk had supplied Cllr Carter with 30 grass cutting letters to go to the residents thanking them for cutting the grass on Parish land.

The Clerk read out a letter he had received from Simon Middleditch of the Environment Agency (EA) thanking Cllr Gill, Barrow and Williams for meeting up with him at the Druce on Tuesday 3<sup>rd</sup>. November. The letter also confirmed that the EA agree now that Clavering PC do not own the footbridge at the Druce. The EA will be investigating further as there is bank erosion at this bridge.

**11. District Council Edward Oliver report**

DC Oliver informed the meeting of UDC local plan and that a public consultation meeting was being held on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup>. November, and hoped a Councillor would attend. Clavering is classed as a 3<sup>rd</sup>. level as it has a school and public houses. He requested that all residents put in their opinions. UDC audit was approved. At this point DC Oliver had to leave the meeting for another PC meeting. The chairman thanked him for his report and trying to split himself in two.

**12. Essex County Council Ray Gooding report:** In the absence of Cllr Gooding there was no report given

**13. Planning Applications:**

**UTT/15/3006/FUL** – Ashtree Market Garden Starlings Green CB11 4PP

Retention of existing agricultural barn / storage building

**CPC has no comment to make on this application**

Cllr Stanford leaves the meeting

**UTT/15/3035/LB** – Deers Green Cock Lane CB11 4PX

Proposed refurbishment of 2 no. first floor bathrooms and 1 no. ground floor cloakroom, including the addition/modification of stud walls in each room and relocation of loft hatch.

**CPC has no comment to make on this application**

Cllr Stanford re-joins the meeting

**UTT/15/3200/HHF** - Eastwood Clatterbury Lane CB11 4QU - Proposed detached garage

**CPC has no comment to make on this application**

**UTT/15/3258/FUL** – The Cricketers PH Hill Green CB11 4QT

Retrospective application for amendments to previously approved application

UTT/15/0297/FUL, including the addition of a roof light, flue and two refrigeration units.

**CPC has no comment to make on this application**

**UTT/15/3259/LB** – The Cricketers PH Hill Green CB11 4QT

Retention of a single storey rear extension with the inclusion of a roof light, flue and refrigeration units and an external stair case.

**CPC has no comment to make on this application**

**ADDITIONAL APPLICATION/S**

**UTT/15/2860/LB** – The Tudor Cottage Middle Street CB11 4QL

Installation of 3 no. replacement windows to ground floor front elevation

**CPC has no comment to make on this application**

**14. Planning Decision/s made by UDC:**

**UTT/15/2771/HHF** - Elmhurst Stortford Road CB11 4PE

Proposed demolition of existing rear extension and erection of single storey rear extension and loft conversion including two dormer windows to front and box dormer to rear.

**Approve with Conditions**

**UTT/15/2564/HHF** - Robin Hill Deers Green CB11 4PX – Proposed garage

**Approve with Conditions**

**UTT/15/2455/FUL** – Butts Green Farm Butts Green Valance Road CB11 4RT

Partial rebuild of existing barns and conversion into dwelling.

**Refuse**

**APPLICATION/S REFERED TO APPEAL**

**UTT/15/0699/OP** – Land at Ashcroft Wicken Road. Outline application with some matters reserved for the erection of 1 no. dwelling – Comments to Inspector by 03.12.15

**INSPECTORATE DECISION**

**UTT/14/2385/OP** – Land adj. to Monks Cottage Stickling Green CB11 4QX

Outline application with all matters reserved, expect for access, for the erection of 1 no. dwelling.

APP/C1570/W/15/30313 – Decision: **The Appeal is dismissed**

Cllr Carter, at this point, asked the Chairman if the JFC and Jubilee Field Working Party representative reports could go before the motion proposed at Item 15, as this might have a bearing on Councillors' views.

This was agreed by all Councillors

**Representative report on Jubilee Field** was given by Cllr Gill. Cllr Gill stated that as she was absent from both the AGM and the subsequent Management Committee Meeting and the information had been passed to her by the treasurer.

2014/15 has seen the JF management committee continue working very hard carrying out the decision initiated three years ago to put the Charity in a far better financial position and also address, on a sound basis, the maintaining of the whole area. The play equipment, taken under the committee's care after the Friend of Clavering Playgroup ceased, is inspected each month by trustees per RoSPA recommendations. Outlined in the official RoSPA inspection this year was that cargo net and matting underneath must be replaced; grants along with funds donated in memory of Tim Gingell will be used to purchase the roundabout to take its place. After some severe gale damage, in January '15, a professional inspection of the trees in Simon's Wood (financed in part by a grant) took place as there had not been any maintenance plans put in place in previous years. The report took months to be forwarded to the committee, but identified work – some immediate, some not so – to be carried out, to the order of £4,000. Some work was then carried out by volunteer labour and a further quote sought (£3,750). The committee's fundraising this year encompassed cake raffle, cake bakes, boot sales, annual quiz, an Easter draw and the "Be a Friend of the Field's" scheme. Donations, including a share of the Best Kept Village prize money, were also received, grants sought and gift aid received. There has also been an endowment given over, to be invested to raise funds for the running costs. This is the only income stream for the Charity, though in 2014/15 ground rent was charged to the tennis and bowls club, the scouts rented space in the pavilion and the village hall and Parish Council paid a share of the grass cutting (1/6<sup>th</sup> each).

As at 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015 the Field held £10,750 in Endowment monies : £3,985 Tim Gingell collection : £150 on behalf of the Countryside Group (part unused grant) : £9,398 in reserves.

The budget drawn up for 2015/16 shows that, allowing for known maintenance costs which must be addressed immediately (including the mentioned tree work) and assuming the ground rents and income from other village organisations continues as for 2014/15, there will be an overall reduction in reserves of approx.. £5,500 by September 2016. The committee will not be able to sit back in 2015/16 and will have to continue to put maximum efforts into fundraising to provide for future maintenance, such as playground repairs, pavilion roof repairs and further tree works.

**Representative report on JFWP** was given by Cllr Boardman who stated: As you may recall Cllr Wilkinson and Cllr Boardman were asked last October to undertake a working party review of the Jubilee Field. Following the resignation of Cllr Wilkinson earlier this year, Cllr Couchman and Cllr Boardman agreed to carry on this working party review. The original 'assumption' from the Jubilee Field was that the Parish Council would hand over an annual sum to support the Jubilee Field in their good work in providing a safe space for the Parish. Given the complexities of the Trust for the Jubilee Field and the constraints of Parish Council's, we have been honest in setting expectations that this will not be the case. We have continued to explore areas where assistance can be given to the Jubilee Field moving forward. Given Cllr Boardman's operation, which has taken longer to recover from than anticipated, and the summer break, this has delayed coming back to the council with further information. Further to our work with the representatives of the Jubilee Field, we have been approached to look at three areas:- Tree Safety: Grass Cutting: Public Liability

**Tree Safety:-** We had been given a copy of a tree safety report that identified some trees requiring immediate felling for safety reasons. Other trees were identified as requiring attention over a period of time as a matter of good woodland management.

We believe that a good way forward is for the Parish Council to support the Jubilee Field when safety related matters are identified on a case by case basis. Our joint motion for funding, as already proposed, was for 3 trees identified from the safety report by Maydencroft that required felling (as a 1st Priority). Cllr Couchman and myself were informed this week that the 3 trees requiring immediate felling had actually been felled. Following further conversations and checking the site, 2 of the trees have not been felled but the tops have been roughly removed. The 3rd tree from the Maydencroft report was difficult to identify. Following discussion with the Jubilee Field representatives, it was noted the trees had been topped but not felled. They are confident that felling these trees could now be undertaken by volunteers. Cllr Couchman and myself have looked further at the Maydencroft report and identified tree #410 which is an Oak Tree near the Bridge requiring removal of dead branches overhanging the pathway and bridge. As a result, we would like to amend our original motion. **"In recognition of the value of the Jubilee Field to all parishioners, the Council gives financial assistance by paying up to a value of £300 (plus VAT) for safety related tree work to tree number 410 under the current year's budget"**

**Grass Cutting:-** This is being explored at the moment by the Jubilee Field. They are investigating various ways to get the grass cut at a reasonable cost. We look forward to seeing how we can assist them further once they have completed their investigations.

**Public Liability:-** The insurance is a very complex area. At this stage, it wouldn't be possible for the Parish Council to cover any liability.

We are hoping to meet up with the Jubilee Field representatives very soon to report back to the Council further and support them in the great work they do for the Parish.

Cllr Gill left the meeting. Cllr Stanford, as Vice-Chairman, took the Chair.

The Councillors then went on to discuss the REVISED motion put forward by Cllr Boardman and Couchman jointly.

**15. Revised Motion jointly proposed by Cllr Couchman and Cllr Boardman that:**

"In recognition of the value of the Jubilee Field to all parishioners, the Council gives financial assistance by paying up to a value of £300 (plus VAT) for safety related tree work under the current year's budget" Proposed by Cllr Carter and seconded by Cllr Couchman **F9 Ab0 Ag0**

Cllr Gill re-joined the meeting and took back the Chair.

**16. To finalise and agree budget 2016/17 – Approve final budget and precept proposal.**

The RFO presented the second draft of budget figures for 2016/17. The Councillors amended some figures and the final budget will be presented at the December meeting in readiness for presenting the precept to UDC in January 2016.

**17. Finance:**

Credit Received: Nil					
Chq No	Inv. No	Payee	Cost	VAT	Total
s/o ***		Kevin Money salary	£ 343.02	£0	£ 343.02
1479	October	HMRC payment	£ 85.80	£0	£ 85.80
1480	04217	Creda Planning	£ 500.00	£100.00	£ 600.00
1481	October	Clerk Expenses	£ 13.26	£0	£ 13.26
1482	2111	P. Abrahams Grass cutting	£ 100.00	£ 20.00	£ 120.00
1483	0235	Ellen Willmott Payroll services	£ 17.50	£0	£ 17.50
1484	2015/16	UALC Subscription	£ 25.00	£0	£ 25.00
1485	127	Clavering Village Hall – Hire of Hall Oct '15 – Mar '16	£ 150.00	£0	£ 150.00
		<b>TOTAL:</b>	<b>£1234.58</b>	<b>£120.00</b>	<b>£1354.58</b>

Outstanding Cheques £480.00p Chq No/s: 1474

Balance at NatWest Bank as at 30.09.15 £13,206.94p

Balance at NatWest Bank as at 31.10.15 £12,181.51p \*\*\* included in 31.10.15 balance

After above agreed Cheques £11,169.95p

Cllr Stanford proposed and Cllr Boardman seconded that the above cheques be paid **F9 Ab0 Ag0**

**18. Section 4 of Risk Assessment** – The Clerk presented section 4 (Finance) of the Risk Assessment. After carefully consideration and deliberation the Councillors (with amendments that the Clerk will process) agree to section 4 being accepted. **F9 Ab0 Ag0**. It was agreed that a meeting should be arranged with the Clerk and P. Smith, the Website Coordinator re the time-sensitive posting of the PC Minutes and the Agenda. The Chairman asked to be present at the meeting.

**At 9.30pm the Vice-Chairman asked and the Councillors agreed to continue with the business of the Council**

**19. Allotment update from Cllr Patmore** – reported that the clearing trees, shrubs and burning them, clearing the tall grass and weeds, levelling the two heaps of soil taken from the two village horse ponds, ploughing or harrowing the area and leaving it clean and tidy can happen and Mr. Baalam can undertake the works. Cllr. Gill proposed and Cllr Carter seconded: The PC agree to allow Cllr Patmore to contact Mr. Baalam to proceed with the allotment tidying up, cutting of trees, cutting grass and levelling the soil to enable the area to be fit for use on the unused allotments. A limit of £500 (inc. VAT) be allocated. **F7 Ab2 Ag0**

**20. Representative reports**

**Allotments report** given by Cllr Patmore. Cllr Patmore gave the Clerk an envelope with £97.50p from allotment holders paying their rent. Cllr Patmore informed the meeting that as Thames Water lorries use the road and damage the verges at the allotments that the clerk should contact Thames Water and ask them to make an inspection of the damaged roadway and verges. Mr. Baalam has said that he can cut the hedges if requested to do so.

**Village Hall report** given by Cllr Couchman reported that at the annual meeting all serving officers and committee members were re-elected. The annual accounts were approved. There had been good results from the Art Show and Fete along with slight increase in hiring's against reduced outgoing. This resulted in an increase of reserves of approximately £2,000. A full report is available should anyone want a copy. There had been an excessive use of water. The valve on the toilet flushing mechanism has a tendency to stick causing continuous run of water, so could all users check and inform the secretary if it cannot be stopped.

**Jubilee Field report** given by Cllr Gill – already given above

**Jubilee Field working party** report by Cllr Boardman – already given above

Employment Committee given by Cllr Boardman – A meeting will be held in December with the Clerk and employment committee.

**21. Village Green update** – Cllrs Gill and Carter had asked for the report issued January 2015 to be recirculated: some recommendations had been carried out, others needed addressing still. Cllr Gill thanked those member of the public who were still present to hear this discussion.

Outstanding tasks:

- i) Land by Hillside Cottage. Cllr Couchman volunteered to clear this strip of land.
- ii) Letters to thank residents for mowing Parish owned land. See Clerk's report above.
- iii) Maintenance of Lower Hill Green. Mr Whyman had supplied Cllr Gill with photographs from c. 1988 which seemed to indicate that this area was cut for Clavering's then late May Bank Holiday Fete. There are thistles, ragwort, cow parsley & docks that need addressing. Parishioners had indicated that Mr Balaam Mr Laws and

Mr Rouse had the required equipment to cut and bale, so they would be approached to tender. Mr Frans has a flail mower which would be a 2<sup>nd</sup> best option of maintain this area.

iv) Ditch behind the Cricket Pavilion. UDC have not indicated that the surface water pipe in not allowed. Quotes to be sought for the ditch to be dug out.

v) Stickling Green. Although the area to the pump had been cleared, it appears that the contractor informed Mr Clayton, now Cllr Clayton, at the time of works, that there are further dead and diseased trees behind the pump. The Clerk had not been informed of this, nor had Cllr Carter who had overseen the work. The area behind the pump will now be looked at further. Cllr Couchman also informed the meeting that he had strimmed the area to the front of the pump. This area is actually in the contract with P Abrahams.

vi) Stickling Green: yearly mowing and baling. Contractors mentioned in iii) to be contacted.

vii) House signs, timber edging and other items placed on Greens. Agreed that the Council needs to determine a consistent policy.

viii) Butts Green. It has been established that Mark Wilkinson looks after this Green but has been unable to do so in 2015 as the trailer noted in December 2014, the property of the Perkins family of Butts Green Farm, is still present. A letter to be written by the Clerk requesting the trailer's removal.

ix) Willow at the Druce Bank. This is growing around an electricity cable and therefore not safe for the Council to do.

x) Dick Ball Meadow Hedge: Mr Balaam to be asked if he is still able to cut this for 2015 as before. It was then agreed that the Chair would speak to Mr Balaam concerning the work at the allotments agreed that evening, the cutting of Lower Hill and Stickling Green and the hedge at the Dick Ball Meadow. The Chair agreed to update the report with the actions undertaken to date.

**22. Risk Assessment book – nothing placed in Risk assessment book**

**23. Items for next agenda:**

- Village Green update
- Risk Assessment Section 5
- Salt spreading scheme
- Emergency plan

Cllr Couchman asked the Employment Committee if the Employment Meeting in December would be advertised on the Parish Notice Board. The Chair confirmed that it would be, but it is not open to the public. Cllr Couchman stated he wished to attend the Employment Meeting as an observer and could do so as it was a Meeting of a Council Committee. As before, the Chair stated that she understood current Employment Law does not allow this and she will again obtain written confirmation from Mr Perry, the UDC Assistant Chief Executive, Legal and Monitoring Officer, on Employment Committee Meetings.

**Date of next meeting Monday 14<sup>th</sup>. December 2015 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall**

There being no more business the Chairman closed the meeting at 10.20pm and thanked everyone for attending.

Signed.....Date 14<sup>th</sup>. December 2015  
**Stephanie M. Gill**