

BOXTED PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 14 JUNE 2023 BOXTED VILLAGE HALL AT 7.30PM

PRESENT: Members – Councillors Jamie Seakens (Chair), Arabella Brentnall, James Collitt, Amin Dedhar, Jonathan Hunt, Angela Mclauchlan, Lee Smith. Clerk – Karen Thompson

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: Essex County Council representative Cllr Lewis Barber, members of the public including former Councillor Gene Pugh were present.

23/82 Welcome and noting apologies.

Jamie Seakens welcomed everyone to the meeting and noted that Cllr Steve Bays had submitted apologies.

23/83 To consider Co-opting Gene Pugh to the Parish Council as co-opted members

The Council co-opted Gene Pugh to the open position of Councillor with immediate effect.

23/84 Newly co-opted councillors to sign Declaration of Acceptance of Office. Gene Pugh signed the acceptance of office and joined the Council.

23/85 Declaration of Interests – None declared.

23/86 Public Participation Session

A member of the public spoke in support of the request to site a donated bench in memory of long-standing resident Ruth Sycamore. Ruth was a support to many in the village, a member of the WI, Evergreens, Methodist Church and supporter of the Community Hub. She will be missed by many.

The issue of the planned closure of the public footpath through the former garage site was also raised as it will require school children, in particular, to navigate the impassable pavements along Cross Cottages. The Council decided to raise this with the Colchester Homes on Health and Safety grounds and seek that the development proceeds in stages resulting in a much shorter closure of the footpath than the 18 months planned.

23/87 Minutes of the last meetings of the Council held on 17th May 2023.

Councillors resolved to agree the minutes of the last meeting.

23/88 Borough and County Council - To receive the reports of the District and County Councillors. To receive the verbal reports of the District Councillor and the County Councillor.

Cllr Lewis Barber reported that the traffic survey had reported but had omitted to mention any where but Dedham. He expressed displeasure seeing as Boxted and Langham Parish Councils had part funded the work. He has requested that an officer comes to speak to the Parish Council.

Lewis also agreed that an initial meeting to discuss the findings of the feasibility study into footpath connectivity from Boxted and Langham to the Northern Gateway and encouraged councillors to seek the views of residents.

23/89 Planning Applications

.1 To consider commenting on the following applications and noting the decisions made:

<u>231074</u>	12/05/2023	Orchard Farm, The Vale, Wet Lane, Boxted Essex CO4 5TN	Application to discharge condition 4 (site sections) and 11 (construction management plan) of planning permission 212650
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The Council had no comments or objections to the above application.

.2 Decisions - Decisions made by Colchester Borough Council were noted.

23/90 Rural Exception Site (RES)

To note the recent correspondence stating that there is no RES site coming forward. To decide if a further call for sites is made. This was noted. The Council decided that not to call for sites as the previous call was unsuccessful. This decision would be revisited in future years.

23/91 Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR)

.1 To consider the effectiveness of the System of Internal Control. (See Attached)

And to approve the Annual Governance Statement (AGAR Section 1). (See AGAR attached – awaiting signatures).

The Council considered the effectiveness of the Statement of Internal Control and resolved to check that the FSCS account protection was per account and not per user, but otherwise approved the Statement of Internal Control.

The Council resolved to approve the Annual Governance Statement (AGAR Section 1).

- .2 To consider the Annual Internal Audit Report of Accounts Year Ended 31 March 2023. (See attachment).**

This was received and accepted.

- .3 To consider the Accounting Statements (Section 2 of the Annual Return (AGAR)).**

To approve the Accounting Statements, by resolution, and ensure the Accounting Statements are signed and dated by the Council Meeting Chair.

The Council resolved to approve the Accounting Statements. These were signed and dated.

- .4 To decide the dates for the exercise of Public Rights of Inspection commencing Monday 17 June to Friday 28 July 2023 and running for a period of 30 working days. And to publish a notice of the Public Right of Inspection at least 1 working day before the period of inspection on the Council website along with the 'Council Accounts: A Summary of Your Rights'.**

The dates for the Exercise of Public Rights were agreed as Monday 17th June – Friday 28th July 2023.

- .5 To appoint Heelis and Lodge as internal auditors for 2023/2024.**

Heelis and Lodge for appointed as internal auditors for 23/24.

23/92 Parish Council Finance and Audit

- .1 To receive the Parish Council Financial Report as at the 31 May 2023 (see attachments including bank and card statements).**

The financial statement was received, and the following was noted. Spend to date after two months of the financial year was £20,991 and receipts were £61,029 as 50% of the Council precept was received in April. Bank holdings were £ 99,429.

- .2 To approve for payment the invoices presented.**

The following invoices and payments were approved.

Parish Council Invoices

Gross Pay	£2320.63
Clerks expenses (wfh, mileage, sundries)	£63.80
Green recycling bins	£70.54
Village Hall room hire	£20.00
Fuel for mowers - Tuckwells	£97.99
CALC subscription	£35.00
Heelis & Lodge Internal Audit	£470.00
Vertas – Grass cutting contract	£1,679.87
Cheap Web Hosting domain site	£18.95
Cloudy IT licenses	£289.80
Moser – groundcare – pitch improvement	£3,324.00
Colchester - Election fee	£64.00
Fuel for Councillor - strimming	£49.01
Coronation Event	£233.65
Marks Tey Radio – coronation event	£276.00
Silberries band Coronation Event	£100.00
Colchester Morris Men	£150.00

Village Hall Invoices

Michelle Gouray (cleaning)	442.00
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Viking supplies	377.05
Insurance	349.20
Wave water	133.03
First aid supplies	21.84+1.50
	card fee

.3 To consider submitting a Community Initiatives Fund Bid.

The council had three projects to consider. The conversion of greensward land along Dedham Rd before Cooks Hill to a pollinator garden; a Social History Board on the Village Green and the installation of a fire exit path and outdoor table tennis facility between Little Owls and the Community Hub building.

23/93 Review of Policies

.1 To approve the Standing Orders (adopted from the NALC Model Standing Orders) (see attached). The Standing Orders were approved.

.2 To approve the Financial Regulations (adopted from the NALC Model Fin Regs) (see attached). The Financial Regulations were approved. The Council also resolved to ensure that financial risk was reduced by establishing separate banking entities for the Village Hall Charity and Poors Land (Camping Close) Charity so that they were completely separate to the Parish Council. The Council also resolved to further reduce financial risk by establishing a dual authority system for online payments. When these changes are complete the Financial Regulations would be amended to reflect the new practices.

.3 To approve the Statement of Internal Control (see attached). The Statement of Internal Control was approved. The Council also resolved to ensure that financial risk was reduced by establishing separate banking entities for the Village Hall Charity and Poor's Land (Camping Close) Charity so that they were completely separate to the Parish Council. The Council also resolved to further reduce financial risk by establishing a dual authority system for online payments. When these changes are complete the Financial Regulations and Statement of Internal Control would be amended to reflect the new practices.

23/94 Recreation Ground

.1 To note the weed killer and fertiliser applied to the pitches and the re-seeding of the goal mouths of the larger pitches. This was noted. The Council also resolved to request that April be kept clear of play as much as possible in 2024 to allow for further pitch improvements.

23/95 Highways Issues

.1 To consider how to encourage planting of native hedgerows along Straight Rd. This item would be brought back to a later meeting.

.2 To consider supporting Cllr Barber bid to fund a feasibility study into Digigo bus service extension to Colchester area with a parish council contribution. The Council did not feel it knew enough about a digitally called bus service to commit to this.

.3 To receive an update on the Boxted Bridge Save Our Bridge campaign. The Clerk provided a verbal recap of the recent meeting between the Save Our Bridge campaigners and Planning Direct – a local planning consultancy.

23/96 Clerk's Report

.1 To receive the clerks report (see attachment).

The Council noted the report which included Harpers Caffe closed for a week for holiday before the summer holidays; Digital Access Point for the Hub café being looked at next week; and electrics works for the garage and the heated defibrillator will need to be rectified.

The council is now being supported by Cloudy IT with all files and emails migrated. New councillor emails are set up and files/folders are shareable.

The Council agreed to allow a new bench on the field in memory of Ruth Sycamore.

The play equipment inspection will take place in August.

A local resident had emailed commenting on the improved grass cutting on the recreation ground.

The closure of the Cross Cottages Public Footpath closure intended for 18months was discussed under Item 23/86.

The PCC plan to obtain a valuation of Village Hall next week.

The Village Hall Management Committee meeting is scheduled for Tues 27th June – 2pm

23/97 Items for the next meeting agenda

The following items are planned for the next meeting agenda:

Review of Asset Register and
Risk Register and Management Policy.

**23/98 Date of Next Meeting - The proposed date of the next meeting is 12th July 2023 at 730pm.
Necessary decisions being taken before then using delegated authority after consultation via email with councillors. This was agreed.**

Signature _____ Signed by _____