



Stanway

Parish Council

Parish Clerk: Donna Tristram

Victory Hall, Villa Road,
Stanway, Essex CO3 0RH

P: 01206 542221/07759 837111

E: clerk@stanwaypc.org.uk

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Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at 7pm on 25th July 2024 in the Victory Hall

Present : Cllrs Baines (Chair), Chambers, Cotter, Jordan, McAllister, A Norton, Scarfe, Singh, Spademan & Tearle

Also Present: The Parish Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer (RFO)

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1. **The Chairperson welcomed all present and confirmed the meeting would not be recorded**
 2. **Recorded & approved apologies of absence** – Cllrs Bloomfield and Hagon
Cllr Kevin Bentley (Essex County Council) and Cllr McLean (Colchester City Council) also sent apologies.
 3. **Declaration of Interests – None declared**
 4. **Public Participation – None present**
 5. **Minutes of the Parish AGM Council Meeting 30th May 2024 - APPROVED** and the Chair signed the Minutes (previously circulated) as a true and accurate record.
 6. **Adoption of Committee Reports – see <https://www.stanwaypc.org.uk/council-meetings.html>**
NOTED the (draft) minutes (*previously circulated*) from:
 - a) **Planning Committee** meetings held on 18th June, 2nd and 23rd July 2024
 - b) **Corporate Governance Committee** meetings held on 12th June 2024
 - c) **Community Services Committee** meeting held on 16th July 2024
 - d) **Community Assets Committee** meeting held on 19th June 2024
 - e) **Staffing Committee** meeting hold on 18th June 2024
 7. **Essex County Councillor's Report – RECEIVED & NOTED**, including:
Bellhouse Waste Site – Notifications of bad smells from the previous weekend continue. Residents are advised to continue loggings issues with the environment agency. After speaking to the site, Cllr Bentley has been advised that the issue has now been dealt with
Oaklands Meadow – Cllr Bentley advised he is still receiving reports of concern about the maintenance firm and recently had to ask the City Council to empty the overflowing dog bins. There has since been a walkabout by the firm's representatives, and it is hoped issues will be resolved going forward
Locality Budgets - The Parish Council can apply to Cllr Bentley for 2024/5 CCC and ECC grants
 8. **City Councillors' Reports – None presented**

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9. To **CONSIDER** any actions arising from matters brought to the Council's attention during Public Participation – **None present**
10. **Parish Councillor Applications – None received**
Committee Membership – No changes
Councillor Training – AGREED dates for in-house EALC Councillor refresher of either Monday, 4th or Monday 11th November. Clerk to organise
GDPR Online Course – All Councillors will be signed up and sent links – Clerk to organise
11. **Clerk's Report - RECEIVED** an update regarding ongoing actions from previous meetings ([clerks-report-full-council-july-2024.pdf](#) ([stanway-pc.gov.uk](#)))
12. **RFO Report – RECEIVED** an update regarding ongoing actions: ([20240725-rfo-report-to-fc.pdf](#) ([stanway-pc.gov.uk](#)))
 - i) **Contracts or project expenditure exceeding £10,000 - NONE**
 - ii) **VIREMENTS – APPROVED**
£ 500 from Cost Code 21 (Comms & Advertising) to Cost Code 37 (Corp. Subscriptions)
£ 1000 from Cost Code 27 (Buildings & Car Parks) to Cost Code 67 (* Misue and Vandalism)
£ 1000 from Cost Code 30 (Play Areas) to Cost Code 67 (* Misuse and Vandalism)
£ 1000 from Cost Code 81 (Street Furniture) to Cost Code 67 (* Misuse and Vandalism)

*Newly created Cost Code to indicate damage to Council property in light of recent incidents)

Agreed to keep the balance in the Unity Current Account at a constant figure of £ 100,000, transferring any monies above/below this to/from the Unity Savings Account, until separate, higher interest accounts are opened in accordance with the Council's Investment Policy

 - iii) **Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) – RECEIVED and NOTED** Internal Auditors report. The RFO advised of inaccuracies in the Auditor's comments as AGAR publication notices do not need to remain accessible for perpetuity and the published Asset Register was current and valid. Cllr Spademan concluded that Internal Audit Reports can be, in part, conjecture. Cllr Singh highlighted the Auditor's concerns regarding the Council's financial controls. Cllr Cotter, the Corporate Governance Chair, confirmed the Auditor was merely commenting on the Council's own risk assessment, which subsequently resulted in changes to the financial regulations and controls. The Clerk concluded this has resulted in a 60-70% improvement in financial risk management. Cllr Spademan confirmed to the Council there was no question of inappropriate spending, as the concerns were regarding the Council's processes. The Council **AGREED** no action was required.
13. **Terms of Reference - REVIEWED and APPROVED** amended terms of reference for Corporate Governance and Community Services Committee. Local Highways Panel (LHP) matters will revert to being dealt with by Community Services Committee
14. **Passenger Transport Meeting with Essex County Council – Cllr Tearle** presented a report highlighting inadequacies in the bus service, including late buses resulting in missed connections, buses not stopping, non-publication of diversions, old and nonenvironmental fleets and bus stops with no service. Cllr MacAllister added that three buses he was recently on had broken down. **AGREED** the report would be sent to Essex Highway's Public Transport Representative for comment and to request a meeting. Cllr Bentley, CALC and The Colchester Clerk's Forum would also be contacted to gauge interest in support for a unified response/contacting the press

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15. **Basketball Court on Non-Parish Land** – Cllr Singh proposed a free, accessible, full size basketball court should be available in Stanway for constant use. **AGREED** to write to the City Council requesting they consider Wheatfield Road Park or any other available land. Plus, any future consultation on Jansma Park may also consider this facility if there is resident interest
16. **Policy Adoption – REVIEWED and APPROVED** the following policies proposed by the Staffing Committee:-
Grievance Policy
Lone Working Policy
Health and Safety Policy
Equality, Diversity & Inclusion Policy
17. **Burial Ground Concession – AGREED** there is no existing policy regarding concessions, therefore any future proposed concession will be considered individually upon request
18. **Jansma Park Working Group Update** – Clerk confirmed:-
The company charge has been removed and this has been lodged with the Land Registry
A further charge search confirms only Mrs Jansma's name
Our solicitor has carried out a review of the deeds and raised enquiries as a result with the executor's solicitor
A further local search @ £ 278.69 has been ordered as the original is over 3 months old has been requested
The Environmental Search results were downgraded from "Moderate: High Risk" re: contaminated land to "Moderate: Acceptable Risk" as a result of efforts with the Environmental Health Office at Colchester City Council in Feb 2024.
Ellisons Solicitors will be charging costs to date of £ 1500 plus VAT (having written off the sum of £246.00 plus VAT as a gesture of goodwill). An interim invoice will follow. The Clerk has requested a thorough breakdown
The Clerk will convene a Jansma Park Working Party meeting in September to discuss presentation of a "business case" as per Financial Regulations No. 8 for resolution at September 2024 Full Council meeting
19. **RECEIVED Reports from Outside Bodies**
- a) Bus Passenger Representative – Refer agenda item No. 14
 - b) Colchester Association of Local Councils – Cllrs Jordan and Baines advised Karen Syrett, S106 City Council Officer attended the July meeting to answer questions on Colchester's Local Plan which includes 1040 new homes per year
 - c) Emergency Planning Officer - No Update
 - d) Footpath/Tree Warden/Hedgerow Officer – The condition of The Folley is satisfactory. Cllr Tearle advised the area outside the Harvester is overgrown.
 - e) Quarry Liaison Group – Cllr Chambers confirmed new pipes and drilling recently resulted in more odours

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- f) Rosemary Alms Houses – Cllr Jordan advised the planning application is moving forward
- g) School Governors – No updates. Cllr Jordan agreed to be a governor for Lakelands Primary
- h) Village Hall Management Committee – Cllr Baines confirmed all accounts have been submitted to the Charit Commission. The Village Hall floor has been resurfaced with the aid of a grant from the Bank of England. An Enover Grant has been secured for radiators and the thermostat in Tollgate Hall and the hearing loop in Victory Hall. It is hoped these projects will be completed July and September respectively.

18. Information Update – No Updates

19. Items for Committees/ Next Council Meeting –

- (i) Report back to September Full Council with public transport update
- (ii) Jansma Park Working Party to present a business case for resolution to accept Comb Field at September 2024 Full Council meeting
- (iii) Community Services to issue letter regarding overgrown hedging by The Harvester

20. Date and time of next meeting - the next scheduled meeting of the Parish Council will take place on **Thursday 26th September at 7.00 pm, Victory Hall, Stanway Community Centre**

The Chair closed the meeting at 9.25pm