



Broomfield Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of Broomfield Parish Council held on Wednesday 20th March 2024 at 7.30 p.m. in Broomfield Village Hall

23/223	Members attending. Chair: Cllr Bleet Cllrs Odelana, Barnes, Thomson, Bowman, Perera-Morris, Faulds, Scott, Taylor, Howell, Travis and Cllr Blake (who advised he will be arriving late) Also present Planning Officer Karen Hurrell and Events and Fundraising Manager Donna Hance. Resolved: Apologies for absence were received from Cllr Boreham and County Cllr Steel. Proposed by Cllr Bowman and seconded by Cllr Thomson. All in agreement.
23/224	Declarations of interests None Received.
23/225	To approve the minutes of the Council Meeting held on 21st February 2024. Resolved: The minutes of the Full Council meeting are accepted as a true record. Proposed by Cllr Perera-Morris and seconded by Cllr Taylor. All in agreement.
23/226	Public Question Time. One member of the public was present to discuss the following: Parsonage Green: Various problems regarding flooding emitting from Parsonage Pond was brought to the Parish Council's attention and they confirmed that they were aware of flooding and that advice is being sought. Once this was to hand, it was suggested that the resident meet with the Clerk to resolve maintenance issues. (see minute 23/233 below). ACTION: Clerk to arrange meeting with resident to discuss further Electric Charging Points: Advice was offered regarding this project, as he advised he was a wholesale provider for EV Charging points and could help with choosing payment options. ACTION: This will be discussed at the 10th April 2024 full Parish Council Meeting and he was invited to attend to provide advice.
23/227	To receive a report from the County Council for items not on agenda. The following report was submitted by County Cllr Steel: Member Led pothole scheme: All of my 39 (of the 36 allocation from 2023) have been completed, including the numerous ones to the West of Pleshey. There will be a new scheme starting April 2024, but this will be expanded and include pavements and other defects. It is being funded by an £8M grant from Central Govt which has

to be spread over 75 ECC divisions.

I have already received numerous requests for defects to be addressed. I won't be able to do all the pavements and carriageway potholes, so will need to make priority decisions.

LHP

All LHP meetings have been delayed until April pending new processes and budgets.

A number of schemes had been delayed from last year (wending March 23) to this year. Despite numerous requests to get a progress report on those planned schemes, I have not been able to get an answer. I have escalated to the Highways Cabinet Member.

Hospital Car Parking

I met with the Senior Director of Estates and Facilities on 23rd Feb and learnt the following things that are increasing the problems:

- More facilities being added which means more patients and visitors
- Building work – taking up space
- P&R never restarted after Covid
- Free staff parking implemented during Covid has continued – it means there is no incentive for alternative transport
- Top deck of visitors' car park closed for refurbishment

Actions being taken over the next year:

- Top deck of multistorey visitors car park is now open
- Staff permit charges to be reinstated along with enforcement
- P&R to be reinstated – Hospital are working with ECC to start this up again
- Consideration being given to a new multi-storey car park. This needs to be funded and operated by a private company

I have also written to the ECC P&R Manager to lobby the Highways Cabinet Member and Health Cabinet Member to put pressure on to get the P&R link running again.

Chelmer Valley School

I and Cllr Wilson joined Persimmons at CVHS 11th March to support their construction programme that they have introduced for the vocational students. This includes doing some careers work to explain careers in the industry and future progression. Persimmons have donated £1,000 to the school to help buy materials for their trade courses.

National Grid ESO Report

I attended the Electricity System Operator's (ESO) East Anglia 4th March presentation on the outcomes of their study for alternative routes. This considered 9 options in total including offshore, buried, onshore pylons and hybrids. The options were compared in terms of

1. Environmental Impact
2. Community Impact
3. Deliverability (e.g., planning considerations, operations)
4. Economics – Capex cost, lifetime costs compared with cheapest option

All options were assessed for 2034 delivery for comparison purposes.

No option achieved a clean slate – i.e. no silver bullet

Assessment was done at high level.

The study will be published this week.

Transport Safety Officer pilot launched in Essex

	Essex County Council and partners have launched a pilot Transport Safety Officer (TSOs) initiative in Essex. This follows a successful joint bid by Essex County Council, Thurrock Council and Southend-on-Sea City Council to the Department for Transport (DfT) as part of their national roll out of the scheme. £490,000 was awarded for the scheme in Essex. The introduction of specially trained officers aims to make public transport in the county safer. The officers will deal with low-level nuisance and disorder, tackle Violence Against Women and Girls and target hotspot routes and locations on public transport. They will also possess enforcement powers, including the authority to issue fixed penalty notices for specific anti-social behaviours. The initiative aligns with broader government commitments to enhance public transport services. Read more about the Transport Safety Officers initiative Recycling Centre bookings made permanent across Essex Essex County Council has made recycling centre bookings permanent following public consultation. A booking process trialed across recycling centres managed by Essex County Council has been made permanent following positive feedback from residents. A full evaluation of the booking trial is available at https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/rci/essex-recycling-centre-vehicle-bookings/ To find out more information or to book a slot, visit www.loveessex.org/bookings
23/228	To receive a report from City Council for items not on the agenda. No City Councillors were present at the meeting.
23/229	Correspondence Notification of new address to be allocated – Chelmsford City Council. The Parish Council were very concerned that an address was to be allocated considering that no planning permission had been granted for this area. The suggested name was not agreed to either. This process has been questioned by the Clerk with Chelmsford City Council. ACTION Clerk to query how Council Tax is paid and by whom. Clerk to reply advising the Council do not agree to this allocation of an address and request the legal grounds for appeal. (cc to Cllr Mike Steel)
23/230	Consultations None received.
23/231	Reports from Councillors on outside bodies Local Highways Panel – Councillor Steel (County and City Councillor) – nothing to report. Woollards Charity – Councillor Faulds – No meeting had been held. Broomfield Hospital liaison – Councilor Blake – Information re car parking and the lack of park and ride had been received under Cllr Steel's report. Football Sports Clubs – Events and Fundraising Manager – No meeting had been held. Elderly Care Homes – Events and Fundraising Manager – Contact had been made with Bridgemarsh and Madelayne Court.

	Transport – Councillor Thomson An increase in fares on buses supported by ECC – this does not affect the £2 fares at present. Schools – Councillor Bowman Chelmer Valley High School are opening a new 3G pitch shortly. Police – Councillor Scott A stop and search took place in City centre over the weekend due to an incident in a restaurant in Springfield Road. Northwest Parish’s Group – Councillor Blake – to be discussed at a later meeting
23/232	To note financial reports for February 2024 To approve the bank statement and reconciliation for February 2024 To note cashbook income and expenditure for February 2024. To note salary payments for February 2024. Resolved: The Council approves the financial records for February 2024 noting the current account reconciliation figure of £21,534.69. Proposed Cllr Barnes and seconded by Cllr Thomson. All in agreement.

23/233	Angel Lane and Parsonage Green Pond are both areas of land that the Parish Council have managed and maintained without interruption for in excess of the last 15-20 years at least. Neither areas of land are registered with Land Registry with details of ownership. The Council is asked to approve a formal application to Land Registry to register the Parish Council as owner. Resolved: The Parish Council approves of instructions being issued to a solicitor to formally request registration of Parsonage Green Pond and Angel Lane in the name of Broomfield Parish Council and to obtain advise on potential liabilities from the Solicitor. Proposed Cllr Barnes and seconded by Cllr Faulds. All in agreement. ACTION: Additional areas of land to be investigated with Land Registry are situated in St Mary’s Mead, Church Green and Clobbs Yard.
23/234	Following receipt of an anonymous complaint, the Chairman has produced a report which is presented for consideration by the Council. The Chair read her report regarding this matter and it was agreed the following actions were to be taken: 1. Create and adopt a whistleblowing policy. While agreeing policies we would suggest that we need to check some agreed criteria to ascertain if there might be any truth, or indeed evidence, in the anonymous complaint. 2. To do training with staff and Councillors so that the procedure and policy is clear. For instance, that procedures around finance are as tight as possible. 3. Look at related legislation and policies. 4. Share all information here, plus new policies with all staff and Councillors and put on the website. 5. Ensure that in all procedures and policies, volunteers and contractors are included and that said policies are shared with them. 6. We need to agree that all aspects of anonymous complaints are confidential and should only be shared when necessary. Initially all complaints or allegations should go directly to the Clerk,

	even when s/he is off duty, in 1 his/her absence it should go to the Chairman. If both are absent to the Vice Chairman. If the complaint is about the Clerk it must go the Chairman and Vice Chairman, if about the Chairman to the Vice-Chairman and Clerk. 7. In order to ensure that employees receive the protection of the Public Interest Disclosure Act 1998, employees should put their name to their concern. Concerns expressed anonymously are much less convincing. Anonymous concerns and allegations will therefore be investigated at the discretion of the Council, by the Clerk and Chairman. This is a similar process to an anonymous allegation with a Safeguarding concern. They should not be ignored but investigated. In exercising discretion, the factors to be taken into account would be: • The seriousness of the issues raised; • The credibility of the concern; and • The likelihood of confirming the allegation from factual evidence. 8. The allegation or complaint will be either investigated further or stopped at this point and recorded as correspondence which is reported to the Council or Committee to be noted only. If a person is named in the allegation, great thought will be applied as to whether they need to know. Malicious allegations could be harmful to health, their ability to do their job and as employers we have a duty of care to our staff. 9. We suggest that we adopt the Whistleblowing Policy from Cam Parish Council, dated 2019 and attached. 10. Once new policies and procedures are in place, carry out short training sessions asap for staff and Councillors to discuss and feel free to ask questions, so that they all really understand the underlying Nolan Principles and new processes, this will be mandatory training. 11. Look at all existing procedures and check if any need changing in light of the anonymous allegations, in order to protect staff and Councillors. Inform Council or Committee/Trustees of any changes. At this stage be aware that all staff and Councillors will feel vulnerable, and we need to support them as much as we can.
23/235	The Chairman will provide an update on the Village Gateway project. It had been advised that there are no funds left for the current financial year and therefore it will be taken to the April 2024 Local Highways Panel Meeting and the decision will be reported back after then.
23/236	The Council is asked to consider signing up to the Civility and Respect Project. It was agreed for everyone to consider this, and it will be taken at the next meeting.
23/237	The Council is asked to approve a Whistleblower Policy. It was agreed to adopt this Policy in principle subject to changes to the document provided.

23/238	A project to install Electric Vehicle Charging points in the Village Hall Car Park has been considered for some time. A final proposal is now ready to be considered by the Parish Council. The installation of the charging points is proposed for the area of the car park that is owned by the Parish Council and the new assets will be owned by the Parish Council. An Investment and Infrastructure Plan assessment is attached. Agreement will be needed from the Village Hall Trustee to access the Village Hall power supply, who will in turn be granted any financial benefits that are accrued from the use of the chargers. Resolved: Subject to the agreement by the Village Hall Trustee, The Parish Council approves of the installation of two Electric Vehicle charging points in the Village Hall car park at a cost of up to £7,891.20, the cost of this project to be allocated from the CIL Earmarked reserve. Due to advice received by a member of the public attending the meeting – his advice will be sought before the project proceeds. Proposed by Cllr Fauld seconded by Cllr Howell. All in agreement.
23/239	A review of the policies and procedures of the Parish Council is planned, alongside the current Village Hall review. The report attached describes how we will carry out this review. Members should note that all aspects of the review should remain confidential until the final report is published in a few months time. Resolved: The Parish Council approves of carrying out the review as described within the attached report. Proposed by Cllr Bowman seconded by Cllr Faulds. All in agreement.
23/240	The Council is asked to approve a number of Earmarked reserves to be carried forward to the next financial year (subject to any subsequent spending approved or further funds deposited) as follows – EMR – CIL Funds £109,802.67 EMR – Noticeboards £1000.00 EMR – Tree for Life £404.24 EMR – School Lane £17,379.66 EMR – Seniors Lunch £547.00 EMR – Van replacement £4000.00 Resolved: The Council approves carrying forward the Earmarked Reserves as shown. Proposed by Cllr Travis seconded by Cllr Taylor. All in agreement.
23/241	To deal with various Committee budgetary overspends and known spending commitments, a number of virements are presented for Council approval follows – £845 from 4065/100 (Cllr. Expenses) to 4140/110 (Computer Equipment and Maint.) £1280 from 4200/110 (Grants) to 4581/500 (Seniors Lunch) £240 from 4060/100 (Cllr. Training) to 4581/500 (Seniors Lunch) Resolved: The Council approves of the proposed virements as listed. Proposed by Cllr Barnes seconded by Cllr Perara-Morris. All in agreement.

23/242	The Council will consider an update on the Pylons project. <i>Cllr Blake arrived at the meeting at 9.15 pm</i> A formal consultation will take place shortly. It was suggested that a Parish consultation event again take place to gain parishioners views before a response to the consultation is prepared by the Parish Council.
23/243	The Council will receive a report from the Events Manager on the Eco Day held on 16th March. A successful event was held.
23/244	To receive an update from the Clerk on matters arising from previous meetings. Nothing to report.
23/245	To note minutes from the following Committees:
23/245.1	Finance and Personnel Committee – no recent meeting
23/245.2	Environment Committee – draft minutes from 13 th March – not received.
23/245.3	Property & Planning Committee – no meeting held in March –the meeting was not quorate.
23/245.4	Communications Committee – No recent meeting
23/245.5	School Lane Working Group – Chairman to provide update. This will be reported to the next meeting.
23/245.6	Neighbourhood Plan Working Group – no recent meeting.
23/245.7	Health and Wellbeing – Chairman to provide an update. This will be reported to the next meeting.
23/245.8	Traffic and Travel Working Group – Chairman to provide an update – a report had been circulated to Councillors.
23/246	Matters for the next meeting: Salary Scales There being no further business the meeting concluded at 930 pm