

## LITTLE BARDFIELD PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

Meeting held on Monday 5<sup>th</sup> December 2016 at 7.30pm in Moor Hall Barn

### 1. Present

1. **Members** Cllrs William Gardiner (Chairman), Terry Cutmore (Vice Chairman), Clare Beeston, Colin Simpson and Andrew Davies.

**UDC:** Cllr Simon Howell

Apologies for absence: Mrs Chelsea Feltham-Williams (Parish Clerk) and ECC Cllr Simon Walsh. Cllr Walsh's report follows the Minutes.

2. **Public**

Mr Robert Clark, Mr John Bonner, Mr David McMyn, Mrs Anthea McMyn, Mr Robert Candler, Mrs Debbie Candler and Mr Michael McGarr Independent Planning Consultant (subsequently found to be representing Mr Patrick Gardiner)

### 2. Public Forum

The subject was the wilful destruction, under the supervision of Mr Patrick Gardiner, of the trees bordering the Bridleway on Friday 25 November 2016 to force a vehicle access through a long-established track used by pedestrians and horse riders.

Mr Simon Taylor, Essex County Council Public Rights of Way Enforcement and Liaison Officer visited the Bridleway on the afternoon of the 25 November. He has stated "anybody taking a motorised vehicle along the bridleway is committing a criminal offence under section 34 of the Road Traffic Act 1988, enforceable by the Police". He has been in contact with the PC to obtain Mr Patrick Gardiner's address details so that he can write to him on this matter.

The questions were raised in regards to ownership of the bridleway and the land on which the Old Mill originally stood. There is not currently a registered owner of the bridleway but Essex County Council have the authority to maintain it as a Public Right of Way including ensuring that its surface is retained in a natural state. The land on which the Old Mill stood has changed ownership two or three times quite recently and is now believed to be owned by Mrs Tessa Gardiner.

Cllr Simon Walsh ECC had advised the PC (by email) to apply to the Land Registry for ownership of the bridleway on behalf of the local community. The view of the meeting was that this should be done.

**Action:** Cllr T Cutmore to apply to the Land Registry on behalf of the Parish Council

A request was made for the PC to approach ECC to put demountable posts at either end of the bridleway. Prior to the meeting, this request had already been made to Mr Simon Taylor ECC with the initial response being that they were seeing if money could be found in this year's budget.

Cllr Simon Howell UDC advised the PC that he had a discretionary fund of £500 which he could give towards this project (before the end of March 2017) and advised that if ECC could not find the money then the PC should ask for a cost estimate and, if sufficient money was available, offer to pay for it. Mr Simon Taylor will be approached again on this basis.

**Action:** Cllr T Cutmore to liaise with Mr Simon Taylor ECC.

Concerns were expressed over Mr Patrick Gardiner's previous comments to the effect that he intended to use the bridleway as access to the site of the Old Mill to build a house there.

Mr McGarr made many comments in regards to the bridleway, its ownership and past use. In respect to building a house on the currently wooded land, he said this would be refused by UDC but later added a comment that as the land was owned by a farmer then they usually could do what they liked on their land especially if they wanted to build a house for a farmer worker. Cllr Simon Howell expressed the opinion that any Planning Application to build on the Old Mill site in what is (or was until very recently) natural woodland would be refused.

(After the meeting, Mr McGarr has made representation to ECC challenging the past use and current designation of the bridleway. The PC has made Mr Simon Taylor ECC aware of the availability of Land Registry plans dated November 1961 and the fact that no vehicular traffic has made use of the bridleway since that date and probably for many years before)

**Action:** Cllr T Cutmore to maintain liaison with Mr Simon Taylor ECC

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The granting of Planning Permission to the Solar Farm had conditions that existing woodland should be maintained and specified additional planting to fill open spaces on the perimeter. Mr Patrick Gardiner has also been supervising the removal of trees between the eastern border of the solar farm and the Hill Hall grounds. Such a Planning Condition is enforceable by law. Letters will be sent by the PC to UDC Planning Department and Lightsource advising them that Mr Patrick Gardiner's actions may be in breach of the solar farm planning conditions.

**Action:** Cllr W Gardiner to write to UDC and Lightsource.

### 3. Minutes of Meeting 19 September 2016

These were approved and signed by the Chairman.

### 4. Matters Arising

1. Annual Return – this appears to be outstanding or has it been sent?
2. Insurance – Cllr C Simpson has considered this and it appears very comprehensive cover, perhaps more than we need, placed with a well-known insurance company. There appears to be a minimum premium of £300 which we are currently paying. This is probably quite adequate but it could be looked at again when it next comes up for renewal.

### 5. UDC & ECC Councillors Reports

UDC: There was no specific report

ECC: Cllr Simon Walsh's written report follows the Minutes.

### 6. Finance

1. Lloyds a/c – The formal account switching documents were received this week. They will be completed and returned with an action date to be the first week in 2017.  
**Action:** Cllrs W Gardiner & T Cutmore.
2. Current a/c - This stands at £4691.
3. Outstanding Payments – Cheques to be drawn for the Clerks expenses and £40 to the Land Registry.  
**Action:** Cllrs W Gardiner & T Cutmore
4. Precept – This is usually paid by UDC in two parts. UDC need to be informed of the change in bank details. The precept has remained virtually unchanged for several years and, in view of increased admin expenses, should be slightly increased. When the 2017/18 precept information request is received from UDC calculations need to be made.  
**Action:** Cllr T Cutmore
5. Solar Farm Community Benefit – The solar farm is scheduled to come on line on Thursday 8 December but may be slightly delayed. The agreement is for any payment to be made two months after electricity is fed to the Nation Grid. We should expect some communication from Lightsource soon. Cllr C Simpson to maintain contact with Lightsource.  
**Action:** Cllr C Simpson
6. Stop Stansted Membership – Annual payment advise received. Defer until 2017 meeting when all outgoing donations are discussed.
7. Standing Orders – Outstanding

### 7. Planning

1. The Lodge, St Katherine's Green. Change to original PA UTT/16/3190/HFF (0860)  
No Objections
2. Fridays. 3<sup>rd</sup> House on same plot. Over development of this plot. Proposed development not in keeping with a village environment. The PA for the second house was submitted based on extended family occupation. It is now advertised "for sale". Parish Clerk to write to UDC stating objection of insufficient space on the plot and not in keeping with the village environment.

**Action:** Mrs C Feltham-Williams

## **8. Broadband**

Cllr Clare Beeston has continued to progress this. The original BT Open Reach contact has now moved on. The new contact initially requested everyone's phone numbers. Private suppliers have no interest due to the relatively small number of potential consumers. Finchingfield are not satisfied with their private supplier.

Both ECC and UDC are pushing for faster broadband but there is confusion whether we are in Phase 2 or Phase 3 of the projected roll out. 2020 looks possible.

## **9. Queen's 90<sup>th</sup> Birthday Medals**

50 were purchased. Only 9 have been requested and given out. Agreed to make them available to anyone in the Parish now. Indicate on the PC website.

**Action:** Parish Clerk

## **10. Solar Farm drainage**

Following the flood on 25 June, a request has been made to the Solar farm to review their surface water drainage plan with a suggestion that they link the southern "swale" via a culvert under the bridleway to a ditch which flows downhill to the south to join a wider stream. A response has been received that this will be considered.

## **11. St Katherine's Church Roof Appeal**

It was agreed to donate £1000. Cllr T Cutmore to advise the Church Warden, Mr Charles Thompson, of the decision and that the cheque would be given in the New Year (once the Lloyds a/c is operational)

**Action:** Cllr T Cutmore

## **12. Highways**

1 Potholes Highways now email confirmation once a defect has been repaired. So far in 2016, 23 items reported and 20 repaired. Outstanding are the pavement outside the entrance to the Alms Houses, the pavement alongside Little Bardfield Hall wall, and a developing pothole on the corner by "Squirrels". (subsequent to the meeting this has been "orange lined" for repair by ECC Highways)

To fully repair the pavement beside the Hall would be a waste of money as it is only used by dog walkers before continuing on the rest of the roadway which has no pavement. It would be more cost effective to simply remove the damaged pavement and level it with the roadway.

2 Ditches & Culverts Following the 25 June flood, ditches and culverts in Hawkspur Green became blocked. The ditches have been cleared and ECC are planning to jet clear four culverts. (Advised by ECC this will occur w/c 12 December)

## **13. Decisions since last Meeting** None

## **14. Any other Business**

- 1** Bright lights on Brook House (Coopers). Needs enforcement by UDC. Email Simon Howell.
- 2** Noticeboards Beyond repair and need replacing. Previous meeting said await Lightsource funding before proceeding.
- 3** Tree clearing, land between Hillside Cottage and Rosedale, HG This plot is split approximately 1/3 and 2/3. The larger part was cleared of mature shrubs and trees some years ago. It has now been completely cleared again, no doubt with the intention of submitting a PA for 1 or 2 houses. It is not known who owns either of these pieces of land. Generally thought to be an acceptable development although a potentially difficult access/egress on the inside of a downhill bend.
- 4** Solar Farm Switch on imminent
- 5** Highways Intending to resurface Hawkspur Green Lane and other nearby roads. HGL was nominated as a diversionary route for traffic. Cllr T Cutmore contested this with Simon Walsh's support. (Despite these actions, Notices dated 24 November were still posted designating this routing. Cllr Cutmore again sought the assistance of ECC Cllr S Walsh on 19 December to stop this.)

- 6 Hawkspur Green Lane ECC used this name in their resurfacing program. Cllr T Cutmore will look again at the naming of the currently un-named lane with UDC and ECC in 2017.

**Date of next meeting:**

Monday 6 February 2017 unless the need for reviewing Planning Applications requires an earlier meeting.

Recorded by: Cllr Terry Cutmore

## **Cllr Simon Walsh: Essex County Councillor's Report: December 2016**

### **Application period open for primary school places**

Parents in Essex are being encouraged to apply for their children's primary school places.

Children are entitled to start school in the September after their fourth birthday and applications can now be made for children starting reception from September 2017.

Parents and carers of children born during the period 1 September 2012 and 31 August 2013 must apply between 14 November 2016 and 15 January 2017.

Late applications, submitted after the deadline on 15 January, will only be considered once all on-time applications have been determined.

Applications can be made online at [essex.gov.uk/admissions](http://essex.gov.uk/admissions).

Parents are encouraged to use all four of their preferences and use the website to search for the school information and check admissions criteria.

### **Essex Energy Switch 2016**

A county wide collective aiming to help residents and small businesses save money on their energy bills is to be launched in the High Chelmer Shopping Centre in Chelmsford town centre on 6 December.

This year's Essex Energy Switch is set to open on the same date, running until 14 February, giving residents an easy and hassle free option to find a better deal on their energy cost. After successful switches over previous years, residents in Essex have saved over £2 million through this scheme.

Residents are given the chance to register from 6 December 2016 until 14 February 2017. Once registration has closed, energy providers will bid against one another to obtain the custom of those who have registered. The winning bidder will be whichever company offers the best prices.

This is a great opportunity for busy people who don't have time to hunt around for the best offer. It is free to register for the Energy Switch and you are under no obligation to switch providers.

The prices offered will be based on the number of residents who register. This means that the more people who register their interest, the better the deal offered.

To find out more and sign up visit: [essex.gov.uk/energyswitch](http://essex.gov.uk/energyswitch).

#### **Power supplies**

Clearly winter time puts the power network under greater strain, so UK Power Networks have asked the following is shared.

Do you or someone you know need extra support during a power cut?

Although power cuts don't happen very often when they do they can be worrying. UK Power Networks is the electricity network and it provides a 'Priority Services Register' for people who might need extra help in a power cut. Older people, families with very young children, and people with specific medical conditions are among the many people who are eligible to register for free support. You can find more details and register by visiting [ukpowernetworks.co.uk/prioritysupport](http://ukpowernetworks.co.uk/prioritysupport) or calling 0800 169 9970.

### **2017-2018 County Council Budget**

Budget setting is well underway, with significant savings being sought due to continued reductions in Government support grant. Clearly front line services will take priority but will remain under a great deal of strain.

The recent cold weather has tested the gritting service and numerous runs have already been made to keep the roads ice free. There are substantial stocks of salt in our depots and parishes have once again been offered salt to use locally.

Simon Walsh  
December 2016

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