WILLINGALE PARISH COUNCIL

Locum Clerk to the Council: C Milligan Email clerk@willingaleparishcouncil.org.uk

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting.
The Council met at 8pm on Tuesday 12th March 2024 in The Village Hall, The Street, Willingale, Essex, CM5 0SN.
Cllr D Stokes chaired the meeting.
Present: Councillors N Pavyer, L Fresco, D Watson and S Bosworth.
In Attendance: The Clerk to the Council and 2 members of the public.

24/017. Apologies for absence
Apologies were received and agreed for Cllr J Bianchi

24/018. Declarations of interests
There were no other declarations of interest.

24/019. Minutes of last meeting
The minutes of the meetings held on the 9th January 2024 and 24th January 2024 were approved. Proposed by Cllr D Stokes, seconded by Cllr N Pavyer and agreed unanimously.

24/020. Public Question Time.
A member of the public expressed concern over recent public comments on the Village WhatsApp group. Cllr D Stokes explained that it was nothing to do with the Parish Council. However, he agreed with the comments made and said he would speak with the volunteers who run it.

24/021. Reports to and from County and District Councillors
No reports were received. The Clerk will contact the District Councillor and County Councillor.

24/022. Chair's Report
The Chair reported the following :
The meeting would be his last meeting as Chair.
He thanked Cllr S Bosworth for organising the very successful litter pick on the 17th February 2024.
He advised he had contacted Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) re the fly tipping in Lucas Lane.
EFDC had advised that the new Beech Rd junction Finger Post was quite close to being reinstated.
He reminded the Councillors about the upcoming elections and to keep an eye out for the nomination forms. The Clerk will email EFDC to find out how Councillors attain electoral numbers for residents who will sign their papers and about who can hand in the nomination forms.

24/023. Clerk's Report
The Clerk had circulated the actions log spreadsheet and all outstanding actions were considered.

24/024. Financial Report
a. Bank Balances and Expenditure reports for January and February 2024
The Clerk had circulated the bank balances and expenditure reports for January and February 2024. With no queries raised the accounts were agreed. Proposed by Cllr D Stokes, seconded by Cllr D Watson and agreed unanimously.

b. To Ratify the following payments already made:
The following payments were ratified:
Locum Clerk's salary & Mileage for January '24 - £215.12
Locum Clerk's salary for February '24 - £173.00
HMRC January '24 - £45.00
HMRC February '24 - £36.00
EALC Training re Election Briefing Chair & Clerk - £90.00
Willingale Village Hall – hire of hall - £22.00
Willingale Village Hall – hire of hall - £27.50
N Pavyer - Microsoft License for Clerk's notepad - £59.99

To ratify payments to be made in March 2024
Locum Clerk's salary & Mileage for March '24 – £179.12
HMRC March '24 - £36

Willingale Village Hall – hire of hall 27th March 24 - £240.00
EALC – Cllr training Cllr D Watson - £228.00
EALC – Election Briefing underpayment - £18
L A Clough – Microsoft publisher licence - £149.99
Willingale Village Hall – hire of hall - £22.00

All payments were proposed by Cllr D Stokes, seconded by Cllr D Watson and agreed unanimously. The Clerk advised that she had asked for the invoice for the hall hire for the 12th March 2024 so that this could be paid before the end of the financial year.

c. Obtain quotes for verge cutting 2024
The Clerk had circulated the two quotes that she had received. A discussion took place and it was agreed to appoint Skippers Grounds Maintenance for another 3 years given their good performance, at a cost of £2,700.00 per annum for two cuts with a cost of £1,000.00 for an additional cut if needed. However, the Clerk was asked to see if the additional cut amount could be reduced to £900 in line with the other quotation. Proposed by Cllr D Stokes, seconded by Cllr N Pavyer and agreed unanimously. The Clerk will ask the company for up-to-date insurance details. It was also suggested that in three years' time the Clerk will look to see if any of the surrounding Parish Councils also have verge cutting and to see if the Councils could work together to maybe reduce costs even further.

d. Financial Regulations
The Clerk had circulated the updated Financial Regulations and these were agreed for readoption. Proposed by Cllr D Stokes, seconded by Cllr D Watson and agreed unanimously.

e. Financial and Business Risk Assessment
The Clerk had circulated the updated Financial and Business Risk Assessment and this was agreed for readoption. Proposed by Cllr D Stokes, seconded by Cllr L Fresco and agreed unanimously.

f. Asset Register
The Clerk had circulated the updated Asset Register and it was agreed for readoption. Proposed by Cllr D Stokes, seconded by Cllr L Fresco and agreed unanimously.

g. Internal Auditor
It was proposed to engage K Weare as the Internal Auditor for the financial year 2023/24. Proposed by Cllr D Stokes, seconded by Cllr N Pavyer and agreed unanimously. A discussion took place over the cost for the internal auditor and the Clerk was asked to talk to the auditor about this as it was believed that the cost had not changed for the last few years.

24/025. Planning Matters
a. The following decisions by Epping Forest District Council Planning department, were noted:

December 2023

EPF/2586/23 Rockhills Farm, Norton Heath Road, Willingale, Ongar, CM5 0QG Application for approval of details reserved by condition 4 'Additional Drawings' on planning permission EPF/2585/22 (Listed Building Application for Conversion of former Granary building into a self-contained annexe, and the replacement of existing C20
08/12/2023 Approve Delegated Decision

EPF/2585/23 Rockhills Farm, Norton Heath Road, Willingale, Ongar, CM5 0QG
Application for approval of details reserved by condition 5 'Additional Drawings' on planning permission EPF/2579/22 (Conversion of former Granary building into a self-contained annexe, and the replacement of existing C20 brick wall connecting main house
08/12/2023 Approve Delegated Decision

January 2024

EPF/2347/23 Land south of Spains Hall Road, Spains Hall Road, Ongar, CM5 0QE
Erection of butchery

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09/01/2024 Refuse Delegated Decision

EPF/2679/23 Robins Wood, Birds Green, Willingale, Ongar, CM5 0PR Prior approval for change of use of Agricultural Building to Residential (C3) (Revised scheme to approved consent EPF/1131/22 - changes to the fenestration of the 3 new dwellings and orientation of the two smaller dwellings which are encapsulated in the eves.
23/01/2024 Approve with Conditions Delegated Decision

b. Appeals
The following appeal was discussed:

APP/J1535/C/22/3301682 Greenacres, Bassetts Lane, Willingale, Ongar, CM5 0QL

It was agreed a statement would be written for the Council to submit to the appeal meeting in April. It was agreed Cllr D Stokes would draft the statement and send around to all Councillors for comments. It was also agreed that Cllr D Stokes could represent the Council at the hearing if the Council was to attend. Proposed by Cllr N Pavyer, seconded by Cllr D Watson and agreed unanimously.

c. Applications: Essex Mineral Local Plan Review
A discussion took place regarding the review and it was agreed that at this point in time no comments would be submitted given that there were no material changes to the already extant inclusion of the Roxwell site in the 2014 adopted plan.

4/026. To receive reports of any external meetings attended by Parish Councillors
Cllr D Stokes advised that he and the Clerk had attended the Essex County Council briefing on the Essex Mineral Local Plan Review and a discussion about this took place in the previous item.

Cllr D Stokes advised that he had attended the Town and Parish catch-up meeting held by EFDC. Unfortunately, it was not well attended and was cancelled.

24/027. Highways
Litter Picking In Progress Signs
Cllr S Bosworth explained that EFDC no longer supplied Litter Picking In Progress signs for the road. He had discussed this at length with EFDC and although they supply all the equipment needed they could no longer give out signs. After a discussion it was agreed that for health and safety reasons the signs were needed. Cllr S Bosworth advised he would able to purchase these at an estimated cost of £347.80 for 8 signs. It was agreed that the Council would do this later in the year nearer to the time of the litter pick in February 2025. The Clerk will therefore place this on the November agenda for further discussion. Proposed by Cllr D Stokes, seconded by Cllr N Pavyer and agreed unanimously. It was also suggested that the Clerk could advertise the signs on the EALC communications to see if other Councils would like to borrow them for a fee.

24/028. Police Report
PC Shepherd had sent a report for the meeting. He advised that it had been six months since Operation Brazil had commenced and that there had so far been a 33% reduction in rural equipment being stolen.
Crime statics for December 2023 through to the end of February 2024 had seen an 11% increase in calls to the police but a 25% reduction in crime.

24/029. Update on the Affordable Housing Project
A discussion took place regarding the consultation meeting on the 27th March 2024 in Willingale Village Hall. Councillors will be in attendance as well as EFDC and Hastoe Housing Association. Site plans of where developments may take place will be available for residents to look at and ask questions about. Refreshments will be served and Cllr D Stokes will ask Willingale Tearooms to see if they could help. It was noted that the necessary need survey had been completed. That nothing had yet gone to planning and that access to the possible sites could be an issue.

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24/030. What's on in Willingale

A discussion took place regarding the welcome news that two village residents (Tom Young & Lesley Clough) had volunteered to take on the editing of What's on in Willingale. In order for the volunteers to undertake the work they would need Microsoft Publisher. The Council was delighted to accept the volunteers offer to take on the editing and to purchase publisher for them with the understanding that the publisher package belonged to the Parish Council and if the volunteers gave up undertaking the editing they would relinquish the publisher rights. Proposed by Cllr D Stokes, seconded by Cllr N Pavyer and agreed unanimously. Cllr D Stokes thanked the two residents for taking this on.

24/031. Email addresses and GDPR

The Clerk explained to the Councillors that for GDPR purposes forwarding any Council correspondence to personal emails was not good practice and advised that she would need to take off the automatic forwarding on the Council emails. It was agreed that the Councillors would only receive Council correspondence on their Council emails. Proposed by Cllr D Stokes, seconded by Cllr N Pavyer and agreed unanimously.

24/32. Annual Parish Meeting

A discussion took place in regard to how the Council normally runs the meeting and what else they could do to get more residents to attend. It was agreed that a date would be set at the next meeting and that ideas should be generated to try and freshen up the format, possibly getting an outside speaker to attend. Councillors to consider ideas in time for the next meeting.

24/033. Matters to be raised by members for the next Agenda

There were no suggestions.

Date of next meetings

2024: 14th May

Meeting closed 9.24pm