

ARDLEIGH PARISH COUNCIL



Minutes of the Meeting of Ardleigh Parish Council held on Monday 8 April 2024 at 7.30pm at Ardleigh Village Hall.

PRESENT: Cllrs Tim Barrott (Chair), James Blyth, Helen Fontaine, Jayne Marshall, Richard Talbot, Emma Thrower and Martin Whiteley. Also present were Cllr Zoe Fairley (Tendring District Council) and Cllr Carlo Guglielmi (Essex County Council).

Officers, Clerk, Rachel Fletcher, and Deputy Clerk, Rachel Edwards (Minutes)

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: 2 members of the public were present in person; 0 were online.

24.051	Chair's Welcome
	The Chair welcomed everyone to the April meeting.
24.052	Apologies and reasons for absence
	Apologies were received and personal reasons accepted from Cllrs Mason and Waters.
24.053	Public participation session relating to items on the agenda
	The applicants of the Ardleigh Oaks planning application 24/00119/FUL were invited to give more details. These are noted at the relevant point in the minutes below. See (a) below. No other issues were raised by members of the public.
24.054	Declaration and Register of Interests and Dispensations
	Interests were declared by Cllrs Fontaine and Talbot as trustees of the Millennium Green Trust. It was noted that dispensations remained in place in respect of proposed pylons, substations, windfarms and for legal action relating to the food distribution centre. See Minute number 23.122 for full details. A dispensation was also in place in respect of Essex County Council's Local Mineral Plan Review, excluding Councillors with pecuniary interests. See Minute number 24.019 for full details.
24.055	Minutes of meeting held on 11 March 2024
	The minutes of the meeting were approved as true and accurate records.
24.056	Planning
	Applications published, received, validated and/or decided since the last meeting were noted. Comments on new applications and appeals were agreed as outlined below. It was noted that, where appropriate, reference would be made to the Neighbourhood Plan policies/Village Design Statement when commenting on planning applications. See https://www.tendringdc.gov.uk/planning/planning-applications for current applications. It was noted that weekly lists provided by Tendring District Council (TDC) were sent to Councillors.
Applications	<p>a) 24/00118/LBC Proposed alterations: existing doorway to window, removal of internal wall, construction of shower room, creation of doorway, repurposing existing doorway. Lamberts, Chapel Lane, Ardleigh CO7 7BJ (comment date passed, previously circulated by email) Council resolved not to object.</p> <p>b) 24/00106/FULHH Replacement of existing flat roof with similar new covering and insulation. Roof surround to be increased in height; overall roof height will increase by 140mm. Solar panels will be mounted on roof. 21 Ardleigh Court, Ardleigh CO7 7LA Council resolved not to object.</p> <p>c) 24/00413/FUL Demolition of existing dwelling and garage and construction of new bungalow and garage. 2 Goodhall Cottages, Coggeshall Road, Ardleigh CO7 7LR Council resolved not to object.</p>
Other/ Appeals	To note or consider any other applications including enforcement issues.

	<p>a) Reconsider 24/00119/FUL Demolition of existing buildings and construction of new storage warehouse, associated yard, parking and ancillary storage. Ardleigh Oaks, Old Ipswich Road Ardleigh CO7 7RQ. <i>Application discussed at the February meeting; Council resolved to object. Application to be reconsidered following new information received from the applicant.</i></p> <p>Information was given by applicants in Public Participation session: Essentially they plan to modernize the site and tidy the landscape. No planned increases in traffic movements; sustainable travel mentioned but they accepted this would be unlikely. Parking spaces would not be reduced. A full planning application was needed as older buildings would be removed and replaced with larger 11m high buildings to emulate neighbouring buildings. They had no links other sites in the area. 20+ job creation proposed due to increase in size – likely to be more jobs created in time. Plan to enhance biodiversity, use sympathetic landscaping, and improve ecology retaining most of the boundary including existing trees. They would accommodate the rural environment and planned country park behind it. Enhanced visual aspect would improve site and attract tenants. Applicant was happy to have conditions applied by planners to support rural aspect and take advice from the Parish Council.</p> <p>Council considered the applicants’ comments. The applicants were asked to keep the Council appraised of progress. The Council resolved to remove the application from the call-in list for the Tendring District Council Planning Committee and to make updated comments that a condition be requested for Parish Council input with landscaping/lighting plans and for use to be restricted to B8 which relates to storage and warehouse facilities.</p> <p><u>Cllr Blyth left the meeting because of a declared pecuniary interest in Essex County Council’s Local Mineral Plan Review (see Minute 24.019)</u></p> <p>b) Essex Minerals Plan. To confirm Council’s comments to be submitted before the extended deadline of Tuesday 9 April. https://www.essex.gov.uk/replacement-essex-minerals-local-plan-review-2025-2040/tell-us-your-views</p> <p>The Council’s comment would be submitted on 9 April. Additional comment received from members of the public would be included subject to time restraints.</p> <p><u>Cllr Blyth re-joined the meeting.</u></p>
24.057	Other Planning and Infrastructure issues
	<p>a) Tendring/Colchester Borders Garden Community (and related issues) Deadline to register to participate in the Garden Community Examination Hearings was 19 April. These would be held between Tuesday 7– Friday 10 May 2024. Council resolved to make comments relating to Crockleford issues and travel problems. Councillor Talbot volunteered to attend to read the Council’s comments from a prepared brief.</p> <p>b) Neighbourhood Plan (and related issues) It was noted that a further update from the examiner was expected. Amendments to the Master Plan must be made and documents returned by a given deadline to enable a proposed consultation date of 27 June 2024. Council resolved to meet the deadline.</p> <p>Cllr Fairley advised Tendring District Council had announced there were no further plans for Ardleigh to have more housing development in the next Local Plan proposed to run to 2041.</p> <p>c) Pylons, Substations, Windfarms and related It was noted that Villages Against Pylons had added Ardleigh into their communications without checking. Council considered the advantages and disadvantages of being directly associated with that campaign. It was reported Sir Bernard Jenkin believed Sealink provided a solution however Tarchon were still expected to connect at Ardleigh. He had confirmed he supported the original campaign. The Council resolved to contact the Villages Against Pylons group to ask Ardleigh Parish Council not to be specifically mentioned; to contact the Pylons East Anglia campaign to confirm ongoing Parish Council support and to contact Sir Bernard Jenkin to confirm the Parish Council position.</p>
24.058	Community Projects, events and assets
	<p>a) Local Green Spaces Existing allotment land had potentially been offered to the Parish Council. Options must be considered – access, cost, legislation. S106 Open Spaces money might be available to purchase this land, or other rural funding sources. Council resolved to pursue possible purchase of the land and establish administration/legislation requirements.</p>

	<p>Local groups might be contacted for involvement. A working group would be put in place. Cllr Barrott volunteered to lead the Working Group. Other Councillors would be involved.</p> <p>b) <i>D-Day Event</i> Events mentioned at the March meeting: Thursday 6 June, 9.15pm - Beacon lighting, fish & chip van. Saturday 8 June, 12 noon – 4pm organised by the Parish Council Local Events Working Group, chaired by Jill Hamblin, with support from Cllrs Talbot, Thrower and others.</p> <p>c) <i>Community Projects and Initiatives</i> To receive written reports /updates on any developments. None</p>						
24.059	Highways, Public Rights of Way (PRoW) and related issues						
	<p>Note that updates on highways, public rights of way and related issues usually take place outside the meeting and should be reported direct www.essexhighways.org/tell-us.</p> <p>To note a meeting was held with Cllrs Guglielmi and Fairley on 3 April 2024. Notes would come from the Deputy Clerk detailing agreed actions.</p> <p>Cllr Blyth reported Hill Farm Chase/Lodge Lane bridleway had a locked gate blocking it and signage had been removed. A resident was advised they were trespassing. Reported to Essex Highways by Cllr Blyth who would copy Cllr Guglielmi in with a response.</p> <p>A letter would be sent to a member of the public who attended recent meetings regarding issues with Dead Lane etc. Deputy Clerk to action.</p> <p>Proposed parking restrictions at Old Ipswich Road noted by the Council. This was a successful trial and would now be implemented permanently by Essex Highways.</p>						
24.060	Reports and Correspondence						
	<p>a) <i>District and County Councillor reports</i> To receive verbal updates from those present. Any written reports received from District and County Councillors are emailed to members. Cllr Fairley had sent emails relating to schools, Tendring District Council Planning Enforcement cases in Ardleigh. No further update relating to Plains Farm Close maintenance schedule, Cllr Fairley was pursuing this. Community Voluntary Services Tendring would hold a funding seminar in Harwich which could be useful to attend.</p> <p>Cllr Guglielmi had sent his report on the day of the meeting and asked the Clerks to circulate it. He mentioned a new Water Strategy being developed by Essex County Council.</p> <p>Cllr Barrott thanked both Councillors for their support.</p> <p>b) <i>Councillors' reports</i> including reports of training or meetings.</p> <p>Cllr Thrower advised Ardleigh Advertiser would not be printed in April; should recommence in May.</p> <p>Cllr Barrott and the Clerk attended a Treasury Management and Investment Strategy Training course run by the Essex Association of Local Councils. See 24.061d below.</p> <p>Cllr Marshall would forward rural grants information received from the Tendring District Association of Local Councils' meeting.</p> <p>c) <i>Clerks' report</i> - To receive a report on key tasks undertaken since the last meeting including delegated decisions and key correspondence (see attachment).</p> <p>There was a discussion about the format of the report which could be revised. Councillors appreciated the detailed report which saved time at meetings.</p>						
24.061	Parish Council Finance						
	<p>a) To receive draft end of year accounts, financial reports and bank reconciliation to 31 March 2024. The end of year position was a deficit of £6712. It was noted that a VAT claim of £7924 made in March was reimbursed on 3 April.</p> <p>Cllr Blyth would be doing a year-end check before accounts were sent to the internal auditors.</p> <p>b) To the following bills for payment for Parish Council and Village Hall including payments made using delegated authority were agreed. Salary payments were also confirmed.</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="316 2027 1444 2141"> <tr> <td>Phoenix Printing</td> <td>£156.48</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Phoenix Printing</td> <td>£72.00</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Court fees- reimburse Clerk</td> <td>£569.00</td> </tr> </table>	Phoenix Printing	£156.48	Phoenix Printing	£72.00	Court fees- reimburse Clerk	£569.00
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Adobe (Clerks exp)	£19.97
RE Deputy Clerk expenses	£21.94
Clerks expenses	£121.00
Cloudy IT	£132.00
DM payroll	£84.00
property 360	£414.00
Daniel Connal partnership	c£700
Cottage landscapes	£850.00
Jill Hamblin (archivist)	£164.59
Cllr Mason	£62.70
Ardleigh Village Hall	£15.00
Tendring District Council	£4,706.00
Clerks Room Direct	£4,200.00
Cloudy IT	£163.60
Bland Landscapes	£330.00
EALC	£150.00
EALC	£60.00
Cllr Barrott	£100.00
Zoom- renewal	£64.95+VAT

Council **resolved** to confirm.

- c) To note timetable for internal audit and for the Annual Accountability and Governance Review (AGAR). To receive draft accounting statement and variance report (attached). Timeline would be set for completion at the May Council meeting if possible.
- d) To note the need for an investment strategy/ policy and consider next steps. Guidance received from the finance course Cllr Barrott and the Clerk attended. Same criteria applied for all councils. Councillor input would be required. The full Council would need to agree an investment strategy prior to making new banking or investment decisions.

24.062

Amenities and Contracts

To receive updates and take decisions on Parish Council amenities and contracts including:

- a) **Council contracts and contractors** None
- b) **Play and Exercise equipment** To note Playquip had been instructed to repair various items as resolved at the March meeting. Payment had been made with a Pro-Forma invoice as resolved. Most of the work was completed on the day of the meeting. As resolved at the March meeting, Cottage Landscapes had been instructed to repair the boat/sandpit. The Deputy Clerk had arranged with Tendring District Council for release of Town and Country Planning Act, Section 106, funding for the whole cost. Risk assessments would be submitted in advance of the work; commencement date was pending. The Deputy Clerk and Cllr Blyth would discuss further improvements with Tendring District Council using S106 funding in due course.
There was an accident on the Recreation Ground on the evening of 7 April. This was being dealt with by the Clerks. A Member of the Public had contacted the Clerk, by phone and email, who had referred it to insurers. There was a possibility an investigation would be needed. Awaiting response from insurers. CCTV could be examined.
Cllr Talbot had spoken to Playquip employees on site; asked them to examine the ramp on the small child play area at the Recreation Ground. They advised it was unsafe; the Deputy Clerk had contacted Playquip and advised the Council of the options. Council **resolved** to contract Playquip to make good. The Deputy Clerk would instruct them as a matter of urgency. Quotes would be obtained by the Deputy Clerk for Playquip to do a full inspection of all equipment. The ongoing inspection and repair regime may need to be re-visited by the Council.
- c) **The Ardleigh Recreation Ground** - Charity Commission return submitted.

	<p>d) Cemetery/churchyard matters Inspection done – Report submitted by Councillors. The area of biodiversity was thought to be too large and covered some older graves which could hide trip hazards. Alternative proposals could be brought to future meeting.</p> <p>e) Millennium Green Details of rotten fence around the pond to be forwarded to the Deputy Clerk to action quotes. (Previously mentioned in March meeting, see Minute 24.048 (e)). Cllrs Blyth and Talbot to action. Trees would be trimmed by Bland Landscapes.</p> <p>f) Village Hall matters Cllrs Barrott and Marshall had inspected the hall and submitted a report. The Caretaker must be included in future meetings to prevent duality of actions. Action needed by Councillors for items reported. Meeting would be held with Cllrs Barrott and Marshall and the Clerks.</p> <p>g) Other Amenities and Open Spaces issues Cllr Blyth reported the bench at the end of Spring Lane was dangerous. It was not known whether this was a Parish Council asset photos and location to be sent to the Clerks to investigate.</p>
24.063	Parish Council Governance and related items
	<p>To consider and approve updates, as necessary, to the following (see attachments):</p> <p>a) Complaints Policy (updated) - Deputy Clerk would remove the Committee Stage of the Policy. Subject to this change the Council resolved to approve the updated Policy.</p> <p>b) Vexatious Complaints Policy (new) – Deputy Clerk would replace the wording ‘trivial’. Subject to this change the Council resolved to approve the updated Policy.</p> <p>c) Social Media Policy and guidance (updated) - Council resolved to approve.</p>
24.064	Judicial Review
	<p>a) <i>Items in confidence. Under the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, the press and public may be excluded during all or part of the discussion of this agenda item as the Council will be considering legal issues.</i></p> <p>b) A new Court Bundle of papers relating to the appeal had been submitted. £2000 donation had been received.</p>
24.065	Future meetings and meeting closure
	<p>a) To confirm the Annual Parish Council Meeting scheduled on Monday 13 May 2024, 7.30pm, Ardleigh Village Hall (with remote link). Cllr Whiteley had suggestions to update the way processes could be dealt with. Councillors could take responsibility for certain tasks/budget categories. Council to consider at the May meeting.</p> <p>b) Meeting closed 9.32pm</p>

Signed by Meeting Chair.....on.....