



# ST OSYTH PARISH COUNCIL



## Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held via Zoom on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020 at 7.00 pm

**PARTICIPANTS:** Chairman: Cllr. Sonia Grantham, Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Alma Blockley  
Cllr's David Cooper, Ray French, Mandy Kelly, John Lockwood,  
Patricia Quy, Karen Sinclair, Michael Talbot, Michele Thomas,  
Julie Ward & John White

Cllr. Alan Goggin, Essex County Councillor (joined at 8.05 pm)

Martin Walsh (Responsible Financial Officer (RFO))

**MINUTES:** Neil Williams

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** None

### OM-20-181 MEMBERS DECLARATION OF INTEREST:

The Chairman advised Councillors, that under Section 31 of the Localism Act 2011 and The Relevant Authorities (Disclosable Pecuniary Interests) Regulations 2012, they had a responsibility to declare any Pecuniary or Non-Pecuniary Interests in any matter to be discussed.

Cllr. Thomas declared a Non-Pecuniary Interest in respect of Planning Application 20/01652/FUL.

### OM-20-182 PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

	APPLICATION & ADDRESS	PROPOSAL
a.	20/01652/FUL Mr Beckford 38 Beach Road Lee Over Sands St Osyth	Demolish existing dwelling and erection of replacement dwelling.  The Parish Council objects to this application on the basis that the property as proposed, looks to reduce the proximity to the neighbouring property, to a distance of 1500mm.  The Parish Council would endorse the request of the Essex Wildlife Trust, that given the status of the adjacent land, which includes being part of the Colne Estuary Special Protection Area (SPA), a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), the Colne National Nature Reserve (NNR) and the Essex Wildlife Trust Colne Point Nature Reserve, no decision be made until such time as a full response has been received from Natural England.
b.	20/01686/TCA Mrs C Venables The Paddock 50 Colchester Road St Osyth	1 No. Copper Beech - reduction and removal of large branch towards number 46.  The Parish Council refers this application to the TDC Tree & Landscape Officer for consideration.

c.	20/01704/FUL Environment Agency Seawick Sea Defences Beach Approach St Osyth	The construction of two separate rock revetments to be installed on the seaward side of an existing sea wall in order to protect the toe from further erosion.  No objections.
d.	20/01463/NMA Mr R.A, T.R, D.R, A.I Sargeant St Osyth Priory The Bury St Osyth	Non material amendment of approved application 18/01596/FUL to improve the layout and relationship of the dwellings within the street scene by changing the house type at Plot 11.  No objections. Noted for information only.

### **OM-20-183 PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE:**

The following correspondence was noted:

- a. Tendring District Council (TDC) weekly Notification of Decisions (Determinations) from 13<sup>th</sup> November 2020 to 4<sup>th</sup> December 2020.
- b. Correspondence from Tendring District Council in respect of Planning Appeal APP/P1560/W/20/3257915 (TDC 19/01813/FUL) 57 Tower Estate, Point Clear Bay.
- c. Correspondence from the Planning Inspectorate in respect of the dismissal of Appeal APP/P1560/W/20/3249724 (TDC 19/01900/FUL) Wellwick Farm, Colchester Road, St Osyth.
- d. Correspondence from Tendring District Council in respect of Planning Appeal APP/P1560/W/20/3259134 (TDC 18/00958/OUT) Land at Warren Farm, The Bury, St Osyth.

### **OM-20-184 APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**RESOLVED:** That having been previously circulated, the minutes of the Ordinary Meeting (held via Zoom) of 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020 be verified for accuracy by the Council and signed retrospectively by the Chairman as a true and accurate record, when the Council next meets in person. The motion was proposed by Cllr. White and seconded by Cllr. Blockley. All agreed.

### **OM-20-185 SUMMARY OF ACTION:**

- a. OM-20-165 a v. The Clerk reminded the Council that Point Clear Councillors were to consider a suitable location for a bench. The Chairman requested that Cllr. Blockley act as the point of contact for all suggestions.
- b. OM-20-165 a vi. The Clerk informed the Council that there was no change to the condition of the footway along Mill Street.
- c. OM-20-166. The Clerk informed the Council that he had obtained guidance on how to proceed with the co-option of a new Councillor, which he would discuss with the Chairman ahead of the January 2021 meeting.
- d. OM-20-174. The Clerk informed the Council that he had written to the Environment Agency with regards to the concerns of residents of Point Clear Bay over beach erosion.

- e. OM-20-176. The Clerk informed the Council that the Community Warden was in the process of obtaining quotations for the alterations to the Cemetery entrance.
- f. OM-20-177. The Clerk informed the Council that together with the Chairman, he would be starting to arrange for the Consecration of Sections 6, 7 and 7A in the New Year.
- g. OM-20-180 a. The Clerk informed the Council that he had yet to write to the owner of Chandlers with regards to the removal of the Domestic Abuse Legal Advice Service sign.

**OM-20-186 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None

**OM-20-187 CORRESPONDENCE:**

The following correspondence was noted:

- a. Correspondence from the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance Trust (E&HAAT) thanking the Parish Council for the donation by way of the Annual Parish Grant.
- b. Correspondence from the Office for National Statistics re Census 2021.
- c. Correspondence from Essex County Council re Essex-wide Bus Shelter Programme.

**OM-20-188 FINANCE:**

- a. Approval of payments for November 2020, as per the circulated lists were agreed by the Council.
- b. The following balances were noted and agreed:

Current a/c	£ 131,678.75
Deposit	£ 53,188.96

**OM-20-189 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES:**

The Chairman suggested that as the RFO was present to address the Council on both the Budget and the Precept, it would make sense to cover all financial related matters, before discussing the meeting of the Cemetery Committee.

- a. **Finance Committee:** Having been previously circulated, the draft Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020, were noted. The Chairman invited comments from the Council.
  - i) On behalf of the Cemetery Committee, and subject to the approval of the Council, Cllr. Sinclair thanked the Finance Committee for the allocation of funding to proceed with a number of Cemetery related projects.
  - ii) Cllr. Sinclair enquired as to whether the grant given to the Primary School towards the construction of a swimming pool had been returned, the project having been cancelled.

The Chairman informed the Council that the funding had subsequently been put towards the cost of swimming lessons for all pupils.

- iii) At the request of the Chairman, the RFO addressed the Council with regards to St Osyth News (Parish magazine). The RFO subsequently gave an overview of the financial situation of the Parish magazine, which due to the loss of income, by way of reduced advertising, together with increased administration costs, meant that the production cost was exceeding revenue. The RFO continued that as the St Osyth Business Association (SOBA) had returned its grant, the Music in the Meadow having been cancelled in 2020, the Parish Council could give an emergency grant of £1,000.00, thereby ensuring that the publication could survive until the beginning of the next financial year, at which it was hoped that advertising would resume to its previous level.
  - a) Cllr. Sinclair remarked that the Parish magazine was a vital publication for so many residents, as had been proven during the pandemic.
  - b) The consensus of the Council was that although technically a Church magazine, given the content, by way of advertising and information contained therein, St Osyth News was effectively a Parish magazine.
- iv) **RESOLVED:** That the Parish Council, award an additional grant of £1,000.00 to St Osyth News, payable immediately. The motion was proposed by Cllr. Sinclair and seconded by Cllr. Kelly. All agreed.

#### **OM-20-190 APPROVAL OF MANAGEMENT PLAN:**

Having reviewed the draft Management Plan on 26<sup>th</sup> November 2020, the Council received the completed document. The Chairman informed the Council that whilst a number of deferments were being suggested, the vast majority of proposed expenditure with the Plan remained extant. The Chairman subsequently invited comments from the Council.

- a. Cllr. Blockley enquired as to the inclusion of the Community Safety Accredited Scheme (CSAS) as one of the Business Objectives for 2020/2021. The Clerk explained that having gone through the process of submitting an application to Essex Police, it had been ascertained that the District Council would not recognise the scheme so far as the Community Warden was concerned.
- b. Cllr. Kelly identified a typographical error in paragraph 17.9 a. Rather than have the Clerk reprint the page, the Chairman requested that all Councillors make the necessary amendment themselves.
- c. **RESOLVED:** That St Osyth Parish Council approve the Management Plan for 2021/2022 and beyond. The motion was proposed by Cllr. Ward and seconded by Cllr. Kelly. All agreed.

### **OM-20-191 APPROVAL OF THE BUDGET FOR 2021/2022:**

At the request of the Chairman, by way of a shared screen, displaying the summary of the financial report as presented to the Finance Committee, the RFO briefed the Council with regards to the budget for 2021/2022.

- a. The RFO informed the Council that the original budgetary forecast was of a small surplus of approximately £1,586.00 for the financial year 2021/2022, however, the following amendments/ assumptions had since been made:
  - i) An increase of no more than 4.9% to the Precept.
  - ii) The allocation of £6,000.00 (for Cemetery related projects) from General Reserves to Ear Marked Reserves, although this would technically impact the budget.
  - iii) The approval of expenditure as per the Management Plan, the exception of some deferments, as mentioned earlier by the Chairman, which included for example the postponement of a new notice board until 2022/2023 for either Dumont Avenue or Chisbon Heath.
  - iv) That a number of grant applications, although approved, had meant a reduction in grant related expenditure from £17,009.00 to £16,208.00.
- b. The RFO continued that the taking into account the points as outlined in points i) to iv) above, he was now forecasting a surplus of £186.00, which was effectively a 'breakeven'.
- c. **RESOLVED:** That the Parish Council approve the allocation of £6,000.00 from General Reserves to Ear Marked Reserves, to offset the cost of a number of Cemetery related projects. The motion was proposed by Cllr. Thomas and seconded by Cllr. White. All agreed.
- d. **RESOLVED:** That the Parish Council approve the Budget for 2021/2022, as recommended by the Finance Committee on 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020. The motion was proposed by Cllr. Thomas and seconded by Cllr. Blockley. All agreed.

### **OM-20-192 APPROVAL OF THE PRECEPT FOR 2021/2022:**

The RFO informed Councillors that it was the duty of the Parish Council to deliver value for money to its residents, whilst at the same time ensuring that the Council did not exceed an increase of 5%. He continued that having taken into account proposed income and expenditure for 2021/2022, together with the Management Plan, and despite the receipt of the District Councils 'Ready Reckoner' the Finance Committee had, at its meeting of 9<sup>th</sup> December 2020, approved an increase of no more than 5% to the Precept.

- a. The RFO stated that having now received the Ready Reckoner, with the reduction of grant payments and the deferment of several recommendations within the Management Plan, it was possible for the Council to achieve its budgetary requirement for 2021/2022, without exceeding 4.9%.
- b. The RFO informed the Council that an increase of 4.9% would result in a Precept of £141,333.00.

- c. **RESOLVED:** That the Parish Council ratify the recommendation of the Finance Committee, in that the Precept request to Tendring District Council for 2021/2022, should not exceed 5%.

The Precept requirement of £141,333.00, would result in an increase of 4.9% or £3.60 to the Precept from the previous year, giving an annual sum payable for 2021/2022 of £76.71 for a Band D property. The motion was proposed by Cllr. Sinclair and seconded by Cllr. Kelly. All agreed.

- d. On behalf of the Council, the Chairman thanked the RFO and Clerk for their work in preparing the Budget.

The RFO departed the meeting at 7.55 pm.

#### **OM-20-193 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES:**

- a. **Cemetery Committee:** Having been previously circulated, the draft Minutes of the Cemetery Committee meeting of 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020, were noted. The Chairman invited comments from the Council.

- i) In her capacity as Chairman of the Cemetery Committee, Cllr. Sinclair raised the subject of the installation of memorials, the design of and wording on which, having been approved by the Council, were then altered without the Council's knowledge. Cllr. Sinclair informed the Council that it was the recommendation of the Clerk that either himself or the Community Warden physically inspect all memorials at the time of installation, and that a letter detailing the proposed administrative changes be forwarded to all local Funeral Directors and Stonemasons.

**RESOLVED:** That the Clerk write to all local Funeral Directors and Stonemasons to advise them that no memorials were to be erected unless physically inspected by either the Clerk or Community Warden. The motion was proposed by Cllr. Grantham and seconded by Cllr. French. All agreed.

- ii) Cllr. Sinclair addressed the Council with regards to the removal of unauthorised items from burial/ ash plots. Following a lengthy discussion, it was agreed that the Cemetery Committee be permitted to implement the removal of such items, at an appropriate time, i.e. outside of any Covid-19 related lockdowns, or once the pandemic was showing signs of decline.

**RESOLVED:** That at a time to be determined by the Cemetery Committee, the Clerk write to the holders of Exclusive Rights for plots (burial and ash) on which unauthorised items were placed, informing them of the requirement to remove such items. The motion was proposed by Cllr. Grantham and seconded by Cllr. Thomas. All agreed.

#### **OM-20-194 REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS:**

- a. **Blooms in St Osyth:** The Chairman reported that the winter blooms were all fine.

- b. **Highways Working Party:** The Chairman informed the Council that having contacted both Tom Eng, Highway Liaison Officer and David Gollop, Senior Design Manager, Essex Highways, it had been confirmed that an engineer was to be appointed shortly to undertake the Outline Design for Safety Improvements to the Crossroads.
- c. **Martin's Farm Country Park:** The Clerk gave an overview of the meeting of 8<sup>th</sup> December 2020, adding that the notes of the meeting would be received at the January 2021 meeting of the Council.
- d. **Playground, Youth & Open Spaces Working Party:** The Clerk informed the Council of correspondence received that day from the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) which purported to explain the reason for the rejection of the Parish Councils Community Initiatives Fund (CIF) application. The Clerk continued that the letter did little than to reiterate the content of his previous correspondence to EALC and that as far as EALC were concerned the matter was now closed, due to an explanation having been provided.

Councillors discussed the correspondence from EALC, during which it was agreed that the Clerk should raise the matter directly with Essex County Council, who ultimately provided the funds and guidance used by EALC.

#### **OM-20-195 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES:**

- a. **Essex County Council:** Having joined the meeting at 8.05 pm, Cllr. Goggin gave an overview of the following:
  - i) That Essex County Council were looking to change the criteria used for Highways projects, from that of National model, to a similar model as used by Hertfordshire County Council. He explained that currently were the Portfolio Manager to sign off a project, which went against the National criteria, they would not only have to justify their decision, but would also be liable were anything to go wrong. Cllr. Goggin continued that Kevin Bentley, Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Infrastructure was in favour of the adoption of an Essex model, which having been mentioned by Cllr. Goggin at other Parish meetings, had been well received at Great Bentley, Brightlingsea and Thorrington.
  - ii) That there had been some 248 highways and/or footway repairs in St Osyth over a period of 4 years.
  - iii) That at the recent meeting of the County Council, he [Cllr. Goggin] had praised the efforts of local Councils during the pandemic.
  - iv) Cllr. Thomas thanked Essex County Council for the repairs which it carried out to the local road network but expressed concern as to the quality of some of the repairs, citing examples of where potholes had been repaired, only to reappear within a few months. Cllr. Goggin explained the difference between an emergency, temporary and a full repair.

- v) Cllr. Goggin informed the Council that the Member-Led Repair Programme (MLRP) was running through until Easter, and that Highways had allocated 3 teams to carry out the work in Essex.
  - vi) The Clerk enquired as to when the footway in Mill Street was to be repaired. Cllr. Goggin replied that when he had discussed the matter with a Highways Engineer, the latter had stated that residents could, if needs be, use the footway on the opposite side of the road.
  - vii) The Chairman and Clerk then addressed both Cllr. Goggin and the Council on blocked surface water drains throughout the Parish, examples of which were shown to those present by way of a shared screen. The Clerk explained that whilst some of the drains had been cleaned during 2019 or 2020, the vast majority were still blocked. The Chairman requested that Cllr. Goggin support the Parish Council in its attempts to have the matter resolved. Cllr. Goggin stated that he would support the Parish Council, and that a surveyor could be requested if needs be.
- b. **Essex Police:** Having been previously circulated, the Council reviewed the Crime statistics for October 2020.
- i) Cllr. Kelly informed the Council of offences in Point Clear and Point Clear Bay by location and where practicable the status of the investigation.
  - ii) Cllr. Cooper informed the Council of offences in St Osyth by location and where practicable the status of the investigation.
- c. **Footpaths:** Nothing to report.
- d. **Benches & Litter Bins:** Nothing to report.
- e. **Planters:** Nothing to report.
- f. **Tree Warden:** Nothing to report.
- g. **Tendring District Association of Local Councils (TDALC):**  
Cllr. Talbot gave the following report:
- The last meeting of the Tendring District Association was the evening before our own November Parish Council Meeting. There have been no further meetings since 25<sup>th</sup> November 2020.
- The Essex Association has not met since our last meeting, when I reported on the Executive's AGM.
- h. **District Councillor's Report:**
- i) Cllr. White gave the following report:
- That the Planning Inspectorate had approved Section 1 of the District Councils emerging Local Plan (eLP), which gave the District a 6½ year supply of housing stock.



Cllr. White continued that the approval of Section 1, would see the number of houses built within the District reduce to 550 per year from the Governments figure of 1,100 per year.

- ii) Cllr. Talbot gave the following report:
  - a) There have been many Skype Meetings and currently the Council Officers are looking at 'Microsoft Teams' as a method of remote communication.
  - b) Tendring at this time has one of the lowest levels of Covid-19 infections, so we can be slightly more relaxed over Christmas, but to be honest, I am not at all sure that I would be more relaxed and then catch the virus.
  - c) Yesterday John and I attended a very interesting 'All Member Briefing', with the pandemic as the major item on the agenda. Tomorrow I shall be attending the Cabinet meeting, remotely of course, and in the afternoon a meeting of the 'Constitutional Working Party' looking at necessary changes to TDC's Constitution to make it suitable and legal for the Council to continue with 'remote' business into the future. I only give these as examples but add that John's responsibility for all planning matters with many remote meetings, some lasting three hours or more and you can see that Covid does not mean reduced activity for Elected Members.
- i. **Website:** Cllr. Lockwood reported that he continued to make the usual updates, including the Chairman's Report, the format of which he was now happy with.
- j. **Community Speed Watch:** Nothing to report.

#### **OM-20-196 REPORTS FROM NOMINATED REPRESENTATIVES & TRUSTEES:**

- a. **St Osyth Almshouse Charity:** Cllr. Sinclair gave the following report:

The Charity met on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2020. At this meeting, Councillor John White asked to stand down as Chairman and therefore an election took place. I was asked to take the Chair for the next year and I was very happy to do so. It is pleasing to me that having been a Trustee for a relatively short time that the other Trustees on the Committee felt that I would be able to take on and bring experience to this role.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank John for all the hard work and service that he has given as Chairman, a post that he has held for 11 years. I am delighted to say that he will continue on the Committee as a Trustee, and as I have a lot to learn, I am relieved that I will have his wise words and guidance.

There is a webinar on 21<sup>st</sup> December for all Almshouses in Colchester and Tendring to look at new technology that may be available to tenants of Almshouses, such as emergency alarms, internet access etc.

We are in the process of obtaining quotes for the repair of the windows in Clacton Road. The government has announced a £13b fund for social housing and it is hoped that Almshouses will be able to access this funding for new build properties.

b. **St Osyth Playing Field Charity:**

The Clerk reported that there had been 4 alarm activations at the pavilion, in late November and early December, one of which would incur a callout fee from Community Guard. He continued that there was a problem with a sensor on the garage door, however, as the Chairman of Elmnden Rovers Youth Football Club worked for GCS Alarms, he would investigate the fault. The Clerk added that there was also an ongoing problem, with the electrical supply, in that the power kept tripping. This, he added was to be looked at prior to Christmas.

c. **Point Clear Community Association:** Nothing to report.

d. **Village Hall Management Committee:** Nothing to report.

e. **St Osyth Priory & Parish Trust:** The Chairman reported that she was still busy trying to progress the educational facility.

**OM-20-197 CASUAL VACANCY:**

The Clerk informed the Council that having contacted the Society of Local Council Clerks (SLCC), it had been confirmed that the co-option of a Councillor could still take place, albeit via virtual means, at a meeting to which the public would have access, i.e. an Ordinary meeting of the Council. The Clerk continued that he would discuss the matter further with the Chairman.

**OM-20-198 CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS COMPETITION:**

The Chairman informed the Council that the vast majority of shops and businesses in the centre of the village had entered into the spirit of Christmas by taking part in the Christmas Decorations competition. The Chairman continued that the 3 trees, at the Church, the Village Hall and the Bury respectively, looked very good.

a. The Chairman informed the Council that she had approached Tim Sargeant, with a view to having the Gatehouse of the Priory lit up. Whilst Mr Sargeant stated that it was too late this year, he would consider the possibility of decorating the Gatehouse with lights next year.

b. Cllr. Sinclair enquired as to whether it would, in the future, be possible to have a tree at each entrance to St Osyth, the trees to be part of the tree planting initiative. The Chairman suggested that Cllr. French could investigate this further, although the supply of water (for the tree) and electricity (for the lights) could be problematic.

**OM-20-199 POINT CLEAR BAY:**

The Chairman informed the Council that since Cllr. Kelly had delivered the letter to residents of Point Clear Bay, informing them that the Orchards Holiday Park, supported by the Parish Council, would be moving forward with improvements, to the advantage of the residents, she [the Chairman] had received 2 emails with regards to the footpath along the sea wall at Eastern Promenade and the collection of litter. The Chairman continued that Tendring District Council were now emptying 2 new litter bins, purchased by the Orchards Holiday Park, which had been installed on the greens between Eastern and Western Promenade, and Western Promenade and Tower Estate.

Cllr. Kelly subsequently thanked the Chairman for arranging the installation of the bins.

**OM-20-200 ST OSYTH ALMSHOUSE CHARITY:**

The Clerk informed the Council that Cllr. Cooper was nearing the end of his term of office as a Council appointed Trustee of the Almshouse Charity. Cllr. Cooper subsequently confirmed that he was willing to be reappointed as one of the Councils nominated representatives.

**RESOLVED:** That Cllr. Cooper be appointed as one of the Councils nominated representatives to the St Osyth Almshouse Charity for a further 4 years. The motion was proposed by Cllr. French and seconded by Cllr. Ward. All agreed

**OM-20-201 PARISH ISSUES:**

The Clerk reported that he had either contacted or written to various organisations/agencies, dealing with matters in the Parish, including:

- a. A resident of Colne Way regarding the partial obstruction of the footway and road.
- b. The owner of St Osyth Boatyard with regards to the Planning Conditions relating to the South Bank.

**OM-20-202 FURTHER MATTERS:**

- a. The Chairman informed the Council that the Salvation Army Carol Service would take place at Cowley Park on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> December 2020.
- b. Cllr. Kelly enquired as to whether the Clerk could liaise with TDC concerning the condition of 70 Colne Way, the property having been destroyed by a fire in 2019. The Clerk stated that he would liaise with the Enforcement Team.
- c. Cllr. Blockley informed the Clerk of a vehicle which was continually being parked in front of the houses on The Bury. A conversation ensued as to the reason for the vehicle, believed to be a contractor's van, being parked there. The Clerk stated that he would inform the North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP).

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.15 pm.

The date of the next meeting was set for 7.00 pm on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> January 2021.

<b>Summary of 'Action Required' from the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> December 2020</b>		
OM-20-185 a	Installation of a Bench	PC Cllr's to consider location
OM-20-185 f	Consecration of the Cemetery	Chairman & Clk to action
OM-20-185 g	Removal of DALAS Sign	Clk to write to owner
OM-20-194 d	CIF Application Rejection	Clk to write to ECC
OM-20-202	70 Colne Way	Clk to liaise with TDC

Signature: *[Signed on Original]*  
SW Grantham  
Chairman