



## ST OSYTH PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council  
held at the Village Hall, St Osyth  
on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2023 at 7.00 pm



**PRESENT:** Chairman: Cllr. Karen Sinclair, Vice-Chairman: Cllr. Julie Ward  
Cllr's Clive Atkins, Sue Ball, Alma Blockley, David Cooper,  
Ray French, Jake Moore, Michael Talbot, Michele Thomas &  
John White

Cllr. Alan Goggin, Essex County Councillor

**RESIGNATION:** Cllr. Mandy Kelly

**MINUTES:** Neil Williams (Parish Clerk)

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** Seven

### **OM-23-087 RESIGNATION OF A COUNCILLOR:**

The Clerk informed the Council that he had received an email from Cllr. Mandy Kelly, in which she offered her immediate resignation as a Parish Councillor. The Chairman stated that she would write to Miss Kelly, thanking her for her dedication and commitment to the Parish during her tenure as a Councillor.

### **OM-23-088 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, Other Registerable or Non-Registerable Interests in any matter to be discussed.

### **OM-23-089 CO-OPTION OF VACANT SEAT:**

The Chairman reminded the Council that the process to oversee the co-option of a new Councillor had been delegated to the Personnel Committee, which having interviewed the two applicants, was recommending that Mrs Catherine Venables be co-opted onto the Council.

- a. **RESOLVED:** That Mrs Catherine Venables be co-opted onto St Osyth Parish Council, to fill the vacancy arising from insufficient candidates at the election. The motion was proposed by Cllr. Ward and seconded by Cllr. French. The vote in favour of Mrs Venables was unanimous.
- b. The Chairman informed the Council that Mrs Venables, who was unable to attend this evening's meeting, would be invited to attend the September meeting, at which time she would take up her position as a member of the Council.
- c. The Chairman subsequently informed the Council the second applicant had been taken ill on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> August, the day after the interview. The Chairman suggested that she write a get well soon note to the applicant. All agreed.

### **OM-23-090 CHANGE OF AGENDA ORDER:**

The Chairman informed Councillors that as members of the public were all present in relation to agenda item 22, Point Clear Bay, she was requesting that particular item be moved forward, to be discussed after public participation. All agreed.

#### OM-23-091 PLANNING APPLICATIONS:

	APPLICATION & ADDRESS	PROPOSAL
a.	<a href="#">23/00898/FULHH</a> Mr R Miller 20 Longfields St Osyth	Proposed erection of 1.8m fence and double gate to open garden to side of property facing Stanmore Way.  No objections.
b.	<a href="#">23/00935/TCA</a> Mr G Edwards 60 Colchester Road, St Osyth	1 No. Chamaecyparis / False Cypress – Remove.  <b>Approved on 10<sup>th</sup> August 2023.</b>
c.	<a href="#">23/01011/TCA</a> St Osyth Parochial Church Council Church of St Peter & St Paul Church Square, St Osyth	2 No. Limes - pollard. 2 No. Limes - fell. 1 No Elder - remove. 1 No. Rowan, 1 No. Fir, and 1 No. Cherry cut back.  <b>Approved on 16<sup>th</sup> August 2023.</b>
d.	<a href="#">23/01014/LBDISC</a> St Osyth Priory Estate Ltd St Osyth Priory The Bury St Osyth	Discharge of condition 6 (Approved historic building report) and 7 (Scheme of archaeological building) of application 19/01524/LBC.  <b>Approved on 18<sup>th</sup> August 2023.</b>
e.	<a href="#">23/01047/TCA</a> Leisure Fame Ltd The Kings Arms 10 Colchester Road, St Osyth	1 No. Sycamore - reduce by 50%.  This application is referred to the TDC Tree & Landscape Officer for consideration.
f.	<a href="#">23/01080/FULHH</a> Mr N Jeskins Dower Court 73 Mill Street, St Osyth	Proposed removal of 1 no. garage shutter and replace with new window.  No objections.
g.	<a href="#">23/01098/TCA</a> St Osyth Parochial Church Council Church of St Peter & St Paul Church Square, St Osyth	1 No. Eucalyptus - cut back. Clear vegetation to western perimeter of Church yard up to a height of 2m. Cut back all vegetation overhanging the farmland.  This application is referred to the TDC Tree & Landscape Officer for consideration.

#### OM-23-092 PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE:

The following correspondence was noted:

- a. Tendring District Council (TDC) weekly Notifications of Decisions (Determinations) from 14<sup>th</sup> July 2023 to 4<sup>th</sup> August 2023.
- b. Correspondence from TDC Committee Services Officer with regards to the inclusion of relevant Parish/Town Council Clerks to the District Councils Planning Committee's automated Planning Committee agenda publication notification email.

- c. Correspondence from Tendring District Council in respect of Planning Appeal APP/P1560/W/23/3319881 (TDC 21/01932/FUL) Bushwood, Rectory Road, St Osyth.
- d. Correspondence from the Planning Inspectorate with regards to the dismissal of Appeal APP/P1560/W/22/3301864 (TDC 21/00635/OUT) Martin's Grove, Frowick Lane, St Osyth.

**OM-23-093 APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**RESOLVED:** That having been previously circulated, the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023 be verified for accuracy by the Council and signed by the Chairman, as a true and accurate record. The motion was proposed by Cllr. Ball and seconded by Cllr. Ward. All agreed.

**OM-23-094 SUMMARY OF ACTION:**

- a. OM-23-072 a. The Clerk reminded the Council of the request from a member of the public that the Parish Council should support the integration of cycle paths into the existing footpath network.
  - i. The Clerk reminded the Council that when this had last been raised with Essex Highways, the advice had been that any change to the status of a Public Right of Way (PRoW) would render the landowner liable for both maintenance and insurance purposes. He continued that having contacted several local landowners, over whose land PRoW crossed, they were unwilling to assume any liability.
  - ii. The Clerk stated that the response from the incumbent PRoW officer for Tendring District, was that the integration of cycle paths and footways related to pavements, not Public Rights of Way such as rural footpaths.
  - iii. The Chairman requested that the Clerk notify the member of the public.
- b. OM-23-072 b iii. The Clerk informed the Council that despite a number of emails, and telephone calls, to the Management Team of the Orchards Holiday Park, he had yet to receive any form of response, other than an automated out of office email.
  - i. He continued that he would try to contact the Management Team at the beginning of the week commencing 21<sup>st</sup> August 2023.
- c. OM-23-072 c v c). The Clerk informed the Council that following a discussion with the Chairman, it had been suggested that a Working Party consisting of a Councillor, the Clerk, representatives of the Point Clear Community Association (PCCA), the Orchards Holiday Park and the Royal British Legion (RBL) be formed within the next few months to oversee the D-Day 80 Celebrations.
- d. OM-23-076 b i b). The Clerk informed the Council that he had commissioned the Parking Survey, which would be conducted in September or October.

- e. OM-23-076 b ii b). The Clerk informed the Council that he would prepare an application to the Local Highways Panel (LHP), for the implementation of parking restriction or pedestrianisation of Stone Alley, ready for the Council's meeting in September. The application would have to be supported by the Parish Council, District Councillors and County Councillor in order to be submitted to the LHP.
- f. OM-23-077 a iii. The Clerk informed the Council that the Deputy Clerk had informed the Chairman of the Allotments Association of the Council's decision to approve the use of polytunnels.
- g. OM-23-078 b iv f ii). The Clerk informed the Council that he had yet to liaise with the St Osyth Rotary Club with regards to the siting of a defibrillator.
- h. OM-23-078 e. The Clerk informed the Council that he had drafted a letter to the Chairman of the St Osyth Priory & Parish Trust to inform him of the appointment by the Council of Cllr. Thomas to the Trust.
- i. OM-23-079 a iii. The Clerk informed the Council that he would forward an amended list of meeting dates once he had received the Cemetery Committee meeting dates from the Deputy Clerk.
- j. OM-23-082. The Clerk informed the Council that he had yet to receive any form of acknowledgement from Cllr. Ivan Henderson, TDC Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, Regeneration & Tourism, with regards to the damage to property during the Corbeau Seats Rally.
  - i. The Clerk stated that he would email the two District Councillors to request that they liaise with Cllr. Henderson.
- k. OM-23-083 b. The Clerk reminded the Council that the co-option of a Councillor had already been resolved.
- l. OM-23-086 c. The Clerk reminded the Council that Cllr. Goggin was already present at the meeting.
- m. OM-23-086 d iii. The Clerk reminded the Council that the subject of the anti-social use of Personal Watercraft (PWC) would be discussed later in the meeting.
- n. Cllr. Goggin informed the Council that as a result of correspondence from the Clerk, on behalf of the Parish Council, to members of the Tendring LHP, he [Cllr. Goggin] he would, on Monday 25<sup>th</sup> August 2023, be meeting with Lee Scott, Essex County Council (ECC) Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance & Sustainable Transport, Cllr. Mark Platt, Chair of the Tendring LHP and Dan McLean, Essex Highways, to discuss the perceived lack of action on the part of Essex Highways, following the approval of a LHP application to lower the speed limit in the vicinity of Flag Hill.

**OM-23-095 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:**

- a. A member of the public addressed the Council with regards to the condition of Point Clear Bay, in particular the number of potholes and lack of lighting in certain areas.

- i. The member of the public continued that many of the visitors to the Orchards Holiday Park, when driving through the residential areas of the bay, regularly exceeded the 10-mph speed limit. The member of the public stated that despite raising concerns over all three issues with the management of the Orchards, who had in turn stated that there was a 5-year plan to improve the area, there had been no action taken to resolve any of the issues.
  - ii. The Chairman stated that the Clerk had written to the management team on a number of occasions but had yet to receive any form of response. The Chairman continued that if no reply was forthcoming, the Council would look to contact the regional manager.
  - iii. For the sake of clarity, the Clerk informed all present as to the ownership of land within Point Clear Bay. The Clerk added that as far as he was aware, there were a number of properties whereby the owners were responsible for the maintenance of the road in front of their respective properties, however, these were very few in number.
  - iv. Cllr. Talbot confirmed that the information provided by the Clerk was correct.
  - v. The member of the public went on to state that they regularly saw visitor's speeding within the bay, and had on occasions witnessed children, whilst sat on the drivers' lap, steering cars along the residential roads. The member of the public continued that having reported the matter to the Police, they had been advised to contact the Council, who subsequently instructed them to contact the holiday park.
- b. A second member of the public stated that there were a lot of residents of Point Clear Bay who were unaware of the notice board on the green between Eastern Promenade and Western Promenade, and who subsequently were not aware that they could speak at Council meetings. The member of the public continued that there was never anything to do with Point Clear Bay, which they personally felt should be included at Council meetings.
- i. The Clerk suggested that the easiest way to inform residents of Point Clear Bay of Council meetings, was for the Chairman to include it as part of her report in the Parish magazine, which was delivered to all properties.
  - ii. Following a comment from another member of the public, a brief conversation ensued with regards to the delivery of the Parish magazine.
- c. A third member of the public thanked the Chairman for acknowledging their emails, to which were attached photographs of litter in Point Clear Bay. The member of the public enquired as to whether they should continue to forward photographs. The Clerk stated that he was happy to continue to receive them.

#### **OM-23-096 POINT CLEAR BAY:**

- a. Having heard the concerns of members of the public, the Chairman informed all present, that the Council would continue to push for a meeting with the management team of the Orchards Holiday Park.

#### **OM-23-097 CORRESPONDENCE:**

The following correspondence was noted:

- a. Anonymous correspondence having been previously circulated, the Clerk informed the Council that having discussed the content of the letter with the Chairman, it was their opinion that Councillors should be made aware of the letter. The Clerk stated that he did not interpret the letter as being a complaint, which had it been would have required the author to have identified themselves, as an anonymous complaint would not be considered.
  - i. The Clerk continued that in his judgement, it was better that the Council had sight of the correspondence, which he confirmed was not in the public domain, rather than to have risked the possibility Councillors learning that he [the Clerk] had withheld the correspondence.
- b. Correspondence from The Conservation Volunteers with regards to conservation work.
- c. Correspondence from the Essex Highways Integrated Passenger Transport Unit concerning a public consultation in respect of Supported Local Bus Services 2024 - 2028
- d. Correspondence from Essex Cricket in the Community concerning the use of Cowley Park.
- e. Correspondence from Brightlingsea Harbour Master concerning the anti-social use of Personal Watercraft (PWC).

#### **OM-23-098 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES:**

- a. **Essex County Council:** Cllr. Goggin began his report by thanking the Council for moving his slot on the agenda. He stated that as Brightlingsea Town Council, which met at the same time as St Osyth Parish Council, had moved his slot on their agenda towards the end of their meeting, the change worked out well for all concerned.
  - i. Having formally thanked former Councillor Mandy Kelly for her contribution to the Parish Council, Cllr. Goggin gave the following report:
    - a) That the Essex-wide bus consultation regarding subsidised routes and especially commercial local routes to Colchester and Clacton, for St Osyth, was ongoing.

- b) That he had submitted a list of potholes for repair as part of the Member-Led Repair Programme, all of which were in Point Clear Road.
- c) That one obvious, and ongoing problem faced by the County Council, was the amount of damage to kerb stones, primarily from the number of vehicles parking where there was no dropped kerb at all, or where roads were not wide enough. One example was a house with one dropped kerb, but where four vehicles kept driving over part of the pavement without a dropped kerb. Additionally, the amount of growth from trees and bushes over or on to some footpaths meant that then Council had decisions to make about enforcing cut backs.
- d) That at a Member's Briefing on 24<sup>th</sup> July around water resources and water quality, it had been reported that Essex is a "seriously stressed area". The County is not self-sufficient and already imports a large proportion of its requirements, mainly from Lincoln.
- e) Cllr. Goggin suggested to the Council that a meeting was required to discuss potential changes as part of a Boundary Commission Review, which could potentially see St Osyth move into a ward with West Clacton and Jaywick. A conversation ensued as to other possible changes which could be brought about by the review. Cllr. Goggin concluded by stating that it would be sensible for the Parish Council to lodge an initial objection to any changes, with a detailed objection to be forwarded following a meeting between the Council and himself.

Due to having to attend the meeting of Brightlingsea Town Council, Cllr. Goggin left the meeting at 7.50 pm.

#### **OM-23-099 FINANCE:**

- a. Approval of payments for July 2023, as per the circulated lists were agreed by the Council.
- b. The following balances were noted and agreed:
  - i. Current a/c: £154,031.54
  - ii. Deposit: £53,569.46

#### **OM-23-100 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES:**

- a. **Cemetery Committee:** Cllr. Sinclair reported that as the Committee had met on Wednesday 16<sup>th</sup> August, the draft Minutes would not be received until the meeting scheduled for 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023.
  - i. Cllr. Sinclair informed the Council that two members of the public had attended the meeting, and that they wished to attend the Council meeting in September with a view to having the Council consider a request for a bird feeder to be sited within Section 5, an area used for the interment of ashes.

- ii. That the topic of alternative burials would be an agenda item in September, and that the next Cemetery Committee meeting would be held in the Cemetery Museum.
- b. **Finance Committee:**
  - i. The draft Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023 having been previously distributed, the Chairman invited questions of Cllr. Cooper, in his capacity as Chairman of the Finance Committee. None were forthcoming.

#### **OM-23-101 REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS:**

- a. **Blooms in St Osyth:** Cllr. Ward reported that she would soon be liaising with Shrublands Nursery with regards to the winter blooms.
- b. **Highways Working Party:** The Clerk informed the Council that he would prepare an application for submission to the Local Highways Panel in respect of parking restrictions or the pedestrianisation of Stone Alley ahead of the next meeting.
- c. **Martin's Farm Country Park:** The Clerk informed the Council that another attempt had been made to access the park, this time by cutting the padlock on the height restriction barrier.
  - i. The Clerk stated that a second security padlock had been purchased, at a cost of £128.00, which would be reimbursed by Essex County Council, to secure the height barrier.
  - ii. Cllr. Moore suggested that a 'ReoLink' solar powered CCTV system could be mounted to cover the gates. The Clerk stated that he would forward the information to the Land Operations Manager.
- d. **Playground, Youth & Open Spaces Working Party:**
  - i. Cllr. Ward reported that the installation of the wet pour safety surface at Dumont Avenue play area would be complete on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> August, and that a new springer had been installed, in addition to new seats on the infants' cradle swing.
  - ii. Cllr. Sinclair added that she had been to look at the progress of the installation earlier that day, and that it looked very good.
  - iii. Cllr. Sinclair thanked the Clerk, Community Warden, Village Hall Caretaker and Cllr. Thomas for removing the old safety tiles. Cllr. Sinclair also thanked Cllr. Atkins for helping to load the tiles into the vehicle of a member of the public who had purchased some of the tiles, after they had been advertised on social media.

#### **OM-23-102 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES:**

- a. **Allotments:** Nothing to report.



- b. **Dumont Luncheon Club:** Cllr. Ward reported she had attended the Luncheon Club earlier that day, however, there would be no meeting on Thursday 24<sup>th</sup> August due to the Air Show.
- c. **Essex Police:** Having been previously circulated, the Council reviewed the crime statistics for June 2023.
  - i. Cllr. Cooper informed the Council of offences in St Osyth by location and where practicable the status of the investigation.
  - ii. Cllr. Thomas enquired as to who would assume the responsibility for briefing on the crime statistics in Point Clear. The Chairman stated that she would discuss this with the Clerk.
- d. **Footpaths:** Cllr. Atkins reported that he had contacted the landowner over whose land the permissive footpath from the end of Dumont Avenue to the sea wall overlooking Ray Creek crossed, who had given him [Cllr. Atkins] permission to cut back brambles and some vegetation which was growing onto and over the footpath.
  - i. Cllr. Atkins reported that the landowner continued to have motorcycles use the permissive footpath, for access to or from the sea wall, and that the landowner had enquired of him [Cllr. Atkins] as to the possibility of a kissing gate or post/ bollard.
  - ii. The Clerk stated that he would forward to Cllr. Atkins details of the new PRoW Officer, who could hopefully offer some guidance with regards to the request from the landowner.
- e. **Tree Warden:** Nothing to report.
- f. **Tendring District Association of Local Councils (TDALC):**  
Cllr. Talbot gave the following report:
  - i. TDALC last met on 26<sup>th</sup> July, which was to be Mandy Kelly's first meeting as a St Osyth representative, but as we all know she caught 'the dreaded lurgi' and was fit for nothing. At this same meeting I had problems with my communications, as whilst I could see and hear all that went on, I was unable to speak or to take part in the meeting (some might say a blessing), due to a computer fault.
  - ii. A lot of concern was expressed about the proposed line of electricity pylons, which is to cross Tendring, from Norfolk to Tilbury, to supply London's needs.
  - iii. We also confirmed the Association's Five Objectives, initiated by our previous Chairman, intended to direct our future activity on the part of the TDALC Executive:
    - a) Section 106 Agreements / Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) - to seek the diversification of how funds used.
    - b) A120 - potholes, pathways, general signage & removal of litter.

- c) The reduction of the carbon footprint, by such means as converting all street lamps to LED, improving building insulation and not printing information for meetings.
  - d) Planning - Enforcement for breaches. Allocation of affordable housing to be upheld or a new planning application made.
  - e) Lower speed limits for villages.
- g. **District Councillor's Report:**
- i. Cllr. White gave the following report:
    - a) That he had, in his capacity as a member of the Rotary Club, been preparing for this year's Air Show. He added that some 250,000 people were expected to attend, and that it was possible to prebook parking spaces.
  - ii. Cllr. Talbot gave the following report:
    - a) I have, at the last two meetings, reported about the changes at Tendring District Council, following the Local Elections on 4<sup>th</sup> May, and my personal observations so far, are that Tendring does indeed have a good team at the top.
    - b) After 16 years as a Cabinet Member myself, I have a very much reduced role to play, but only to be expected now, as the oldest member of the Council. This means therefore I will have much less to report to fellow Parish Council Members, as my specific area is now Members' Standards and Conduct, where they are individuals, discharging their responsibilities as elected Councillors.
    - c) All Residents will no doubt have received a notice from our electoral registration department, asking you to check that those people eligible to vote and living at your address, are all properly recorded and qualified to vote. A refusal to register can lead to a fine of up to £1,000, but I am not aware of anybody ever being fined.
- h. **Website:** The Clerk informed the Council that he would be meeting with Naglotech in the near future.

**OM-23-103 REPORTS FROM NOMINATED REPRESENTATIVES & TRUSTEES:**

- a. **St Osyth Almshouse Charity:** Cllr. Sinclair gave the following report:
  - i. The Trustees held a meeting in August.
  - ii. We are gradually replacing the boilers in our properties and have also installed integrated alarm systems for smoke detectors ahead of the government regulations which come into effect next year. We have also started a programme of decoration and renewal (where needed) at the rear of the properties in Clacton Road.

- iii. Some of the barge boards at the rear of the properties in Clacton Road are now showing signs of rotting so we are in the process of obtaining quotes to replace these with materials similar to that on the pavilion at Cowley Park.
- iv. Having given her report, Cllr. Sinclair informed the Council that the requirement to re-appoint her as one of the Parish Council's representatives to the Almshouse Charity.
- v. **RESOLVED:** That Cllr. Sinclair be re-appointed as a Parish Council representative to the Almshouse Charity. The motion was proposed by Cllr. Thomas and seconded by Cllr. Ward. All agreed.

At 8.10 pm, two members of the public left the meeting.

b. **St Osyth Playing Field Charity:** Cllr. Thomas gave the following report:

- i. That a report on the Arboretum had been received at the previous meeting.
- ii. That Elmden Rovers were very happy with their use of the playing field, and that following the withdrawal of St Osyth FC from Saturday fixtures, they [Elmden Rovers] were looking to rehome their men's team to Cowley Park.
- iii. That there were several large holes in the ground near the pedestrian entrance opposite West Field Lane.
  - a) Cllr. Moore added that there were similar holes along the rear boundary. The Clerk stated that either himself or the Community Warden would assess the holes.
- iv. At the request of Cllr. Thomas, the Clerk briefed the Council with regards to the criminal damage which had occurred on 14<sup>th</sup> June 2023, stating that he was waiting to meet with the investing officer from Essex Police and the parents of one of those involved to view the CCTV footage.

c. **Point Clear Community Association:** Cllr. Thomas gave the following report:

- i. That she had assumed the appointment of Secretary for the Point Clear Community Association (PCCA), with the Chairman of the Council having been appointed as Vice-Chair of the Association.
- ii. That the balance of the Association's current account was approximately £12,000.00, and that a major grant was needed to fund a new 'air to air' heat pump.
- iii. That the installation of a new gas boiler was pending, subject to the confirmation of a grant application from TDC. If this application was unsuccessful, an application for funding would be submitted to the National Lottery.

- iv. That the Association were looking at ways to raise funds such as bingo and car boot sales.
  - v. That the solar panels were working extremely well, with the most recent electricity bill being £1.00.
  - vi. That there had, as yet been no approach from TDC with regards to an offer to reimburse the Association for the bottles banks at the front of Dumont Hall.
- d. **Village Hall Management Committee:**  
Cllr. Thomas gave the following report:
- i. That the last meeting of the Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC) had taken place on 7<sup>th</sup> August 2023.
  - ii. That the Committee was still without a Secretary, and that the task may be divided between existing Committee members of a rota basis.
  - iii. That problems persisted with the flat roof on the Annex, and that despite issues with condensation and the need for insulation and new tiles on the roof of the main hall, the flat roof remained the priority.
  - iv. That the Treasurer of the PCCA was to be invited to the next meeting in order to give a talk on the financial benefits of solar panels.
  - v. That the Village Hall Open Day on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2024, would coincide with the Horticultural Society show.
  - vi. That training to use the defibrillator was ongoing, with a second session being planned.
  - vii. That the floor in the main hall was to be re-polished and new markings for badminton laid on 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> of August.
  - viii. That due to changes to the administration of the Parish magazine, events being held in the Hall could no longer be listed within the usual monthly report, as this was now considered to be advertising. As there would now be a fee for additional advertising, there was a possibility that the Committee would cease including reports in the Parish magazine.
  - ix. That the handover between the outgoing and new Treasurer, Colin Westripp, have been a long and drawn-out process due to issues with NatWest. The current balance was £54,107.64, which included a grant of £10,000.00 towards the repair of the flat roof.
  - x. That the online booking system was working well, and that the Booking Officer would be resigning with effect from the next meeting.
  - xi. That the Committee had agreed to retain the service of 'Flash Park' at an annual cost of £350.00.

- xii. That the Premises Officer was still looking to raise funds for the repair of the flat roof, in addition to seeking advice from an Architectural Engineer regarding condensation and main roof.
  - xiii. That despite having been 'rodded' the car park at the rear of hall continued to flood when it rained.
  - xiv. That non-recyclable items and bags containing bottles and glass continued to be left by the recycling bins, the latter of which presented a health and safety risk.
  - xv. That the next Quarterly Meeting and Annual General Meeting were to be held on 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2023.
- e. **St Osyth Priory & Parish Trust:** The Clerk reported that he had drafted a letter to the Chairman of the Trust, informing him of the appointment of Cllr. Thomas.

**OM-23-104 APPROVAL OF STANDING ORDERS:**

**RESOLVED:** Having been previously circulated, it was proposed by Cllr. Thomas and seconded by Cllr. Ward, that Standing Orders, (as amended by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC) in April 2022), adopted on 19<sup>th</sup> July 2018, as reviewed and recommended by the Finance Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023, be approved. All agreed.

**OM-23-105 APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS:**

**RESOLVED:** Having been previously circulated, it was proposed by Cllr. Ball and seconded by Cllr. Blockley, that Financial Regulations, adopted on 21<sup>st</sup> November 2019, as recommended by the Finance Committee at the meeting of 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023, be approved. All agreed.

**OM-23-106 APPROVAL OF FINANCIAL RISK ASSESSMENT:**

**RESOLVED:** Having been previously circulated, it was proposed by Cllr. French and seconded by Cllr. Thomas, that the Financial Risk Assessment, as reviewed and recommended by the Finance Committee on 26<sup>th</sup> July 2023, be approved. All agreed. The Chairman subsequently signed the Financial Risk Assessment.

**OM-23-107 TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL SPECIAL EXPENSES:**

The Clerk informed the Council of the request from the District Council to consider applying for special expenses, if there was likely to be any change in the functions on which expenditure was incurred.

- a. Cllr. Talbot informed the Council that the special expenses were a means to avoid double taxation. In the case of St Osyth, residents paid towards the Parish's Cemetery, whilst at the same time contributing, via Council Tax, towards the upkeep of the District Council's Cemeteries. The District Council could be asked to compensate the Parish, as residents were effectively paying twice, however, as the fee to be interred within the Parish Cemetery charged to those from outside of the Parish was higher than that for residents, this negated the requirement for special expenses to be claimed by the Parish Council.
- b. **RESOLVED:** That St Osyth Parish Council has no requirement to claim special expenses. The motion was proposed by Cllr. Talbot and seconded by Cllr. Ball. All agreed.

At 8.30 pm, the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) joined the meeting.

**OM-23-108 COUNCILLOR'S ALLOWANCES:**

The Chairman reminded the Council that the subject of Councillor's allowances, having been raised at the previous meeting by Cllr. White, had been deferred pending the Clerk obtaining advice from the District Council's Monitoring Officer.

- a. At the request of the Chairman, the Clerk informed the Council that whilst the Monitoring Officer had not addressed his original concern, she had provided guidance, which was subsequently narrated by the Clerk.
  - i. *The Council can consider an updated report in their decision making, but they would need to take into account, why a new decision should be made to increase allowances again and the financial implications on the Council's budget in doing so, especially how the increase will be funded. It would appear to me that the first increase was based on the TDC work and the second one being proposed is following the Parish Review, but essentially it took the same information into account. At the end of the day, it's the Parish Council's decision, and they would have to face the consequences of such a large rise, twice in such short succession. My advice to you and the RFO, is to make sure your professional advice is recorded in any report to the August meeting.*
- b. The Clerk then informed the Council of the allowances paid to other Councils within Band 1 of the Independent Remuneration Panel Review:
  - i. Brightlingsea Town Council.

Councillors -	£522.00
Chairman -	£696.00
  - ii. Frinton & Walton Town Council.

Councillors -	£0.00
Chairman -	£1,305.00
  - iii. Harwich Town Council.

Councillors -	£768.00
Chairman -	£2,400.00
  - iv. Lawford Parish Council.

Councillors -	£0.00
Chairman -	£0.00
- c. The Clerk informed the Council that Cllr. White would be putting forward an amendment to his proposal from the August meeting, and that his [the Clerk's] recommendation was that should the Council be minded to increase Councillor's allowances, then this be done over the term of the Council, so as to enable the Council to budget for the increase annually. This would be in line with the proposal, but any impact could be mitigated by spreading the increase over four years.

- i. The Clerk reminded the Council that the allowances were intended to reimburse Councillors for expenses such as printer ink and paper, adding that the cost for the latter for the office in 2022/2023 had amounted to £115.00.
  - ii. The Clerk concluded that Councillors should not increase their allowances purely based on an increase to the Independent Remuneration Panel Review, as the allowances were a means to reimburse expenses.
- d. For the benefit of Cllr's Atkins and Moore, who had not been present at the meeting of 17<sup>th</sup> August 2023, the Chairman reminded the Council that the proposal being put forward by Cllr. White was an increase to Councillor's Allowances from £400.00 to £600.00.
- e. Cllr. White informed the Council that the figures presented by the Clerk were reasonably correct, however, he [Cllr. White] had half an hour prior to the meeting obtained information that Harwich Town Councillors were now receiving an allowance of £800.00, and that a motion was to be heard by Lawford Parish Council at its next meeting, that its Councillors receive an allowance of £500.00.
  - i. Cllr. White continued that in addition to receiving allowances, Councillors from the other Councils within Band 1 also received mileage allowance for Council related activity within their respective boundaries, unlike St Osyth Parish Council, who only reimbursed Councillors for mileage claims outside of the Parish.
  - ii. The Clerk reminded the Council that the allowances were intended to reimburse Councillors for expenses such as printer ink and paper, adding that the cost for the latter for the office in 2022/2023 had amounted to £115.00.
- f. A hand written amendment to his proposal having been distributed by the Clerk, Cllr. White subsequently provided Councillors with a typed amendment. Cllr. White reminded the Council that his original proposal of 17<sup>th</sup> August 2023, which had been seconded by Cllr. Talbot, had been deferred by the Clerk pending advice from the Monitoring Officer.
  - i. The Chairman clarified that Cllr. White's proposal to increase allowances from £400.00 to £600.00 would result in an increase of 50%.
  - ii. Cllr. White stated that when looking at the work of the Parish Council compared with the other Councils in Band 1, the amount of work done by the Parish Council would 'stand Councillors in line' for an increase which could be justified.
  - iii. Cllr. White informed the Council that the annual increase to Councillors allowances, this year being 7%, was set for the remainder of the term of office by the District Council.

- a) Cllr. Talbot added that historically the District Council had not accepted the recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel Review but had now adopted a scheme which would see Councillors allowances increase in line with that of Council staff. This would avoid the need to discuss annually the increase to allowances.
    - b) The Clerk informed the Council that until 2020, the Independent Remuneration Panel Review had been conducted annually.
- g. Cllr. Atkins enquired as to the travel and subsistence costs.
  - i. The Clerk confirmed that travel allowance would be paid, were for example, Cllr. Atkins to attend a course, as a Councillor in Writtle.
  - ii. Cllr. Thomas added that whilst travel allowance was not taxed, Councillors allowances were taxed.
  - iii. Cllr. Atkins enquired as to whether Councillors could opt out of receiving allowances.
    - a) The Chairman confirmed that this was possible, adding that it was down to individual Councillors to choose what they did with their allowances.
- h. Cllr. Thomas stated that in her opinion there was nobody present who could say that they spent their full allowance of £400.00 in a year, adding that the agreed and budgeted increase of 7.5% would raise the allowance to £430.00.
  - i. The RFO stated that the 7.5% increase had not been budgeted, as it had been approved after the budget had been set.
  - ii. Cllr. Thomas asked Cllr. White to confirm that his proposal was that the increase to allowances, if approved, be implemented in the next financial year.
    - a) Cllr. White stated that this was correct, adding that it would enable the RFO to budget for the increase, when calculating the budget for 2024/2025.
  - iii. Cllr. White stated that the expenses covered not only mileage, but printing costs for Council related business.
  - iv. Cllr. French stated that the expenses reimburse Councillors for their time.
    - a) Cllr. Thomas responded that Councillors were not paid for their time.
    - b) The Chairman stated that being a Councillor was voluntary and was not a paid position.



- v. Cllr. Thomas stated that Councillors were there for the community, and that whilst some chose to print their agenda, almost all present were looking at the agenda items via tablets or laptops.
- vi. Cllr. Thomas stated that even if one person were to comment on Councillors receiving a 50% increase to their allowances, it could impact on the reputation of the Council within the community.
- i. The Chairman stated that Councillors could use their allowance for whatever purpose they wanted, however, in her case she used her allowances to offset the cost of being a Councillor, when for instance, she would have to take time off from work to attend a Council meeting, or to cover the cost of printing. The Chairman stated that she did not believe that an increase of 50% was the right thing to do.
- j. At the request of the Chairman, the RFO addressed the Council, stating that were the proposed increase to be implemented during the current financial, based on the Precept request submitted to the District Council, it would have seen the current Precept increase from £162,602.00 to £165,227.00, with a percentage increase from 4.5% to 6.2%.
  - i. The RFO informed Councillors that the Council had always tried to limit any increase to the Precept, and that with the exception of the Priors costs claim, had not exceed 5%, when submitting its Precept request.
  - ii. The RFO stated that in the current financial crisis, to increase the allowances by 50% would send the wrong message to residents. He added that he had already heard some comments within the village.
  - iii. The RFO reminded Councillors that any increase would be permanent, and that the budget would have to be balanced next year and, in the years, thereafter.
  - iv. The RFO concluded by stating that he agreed with the Clerk's recommendation that should the Council be minded to increase allowances, it should be a phased implementation over the term of the Council, so as to enable the Council to budget for the increase annually.
- k. Cllr. Cooper stated that the increase of 7% had been agreed in line with that of TDC. He enquired of Cllr. White as to how much TDC would look to increase their allowances in the next financial year.
  - i. Cllr. White stated that it had been fixed for the next four years.
  - ii. The Clerk stated that any increase would be in line with the Office for National Statistics (ONS) Estimated Public Sector Regular Average Weekly Earnings Growth Rate, which as of December 2022 had been 2.7% for the public sector and 6.9% for the private sector.
- l. Cllr. White stated that at the previous meeting Cllr. Thomas has stated that she didn't want money, just to serve the public.
  - i. Cllr. Thomas asked Cllr. White not to misquote her, stating that she had not said that.

- ii. Cllr. White apologised to Cllr. Thomas, stating that having been on the Parish Council for 44 years, it was certainly not for profit, and that he too was there to serve public.
- m. Cllr. Moore stated that having looked at the current allowances compared to those received by the other Councils within Band 1, an increase of 7% was both fair and in line with inflation.
- n. Cllr. Talbot informed the Council of both the reason for, and history of the Independent Remuneration Panel, adding that Cllr. White's proposal, if accepted would amount to £1.64 per day.
- o. The Chairman then narrated Cllr. White's amendment to his proposal of 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023:
  - i. *That as we are already halfway through the financial year 2023/24, any increases to Members allowances in line with the Independent Remuneration Panel report (Jan 23) should not be paid until the financial year 2024/25. This will allow it to be included in the Budget for the year.*
  - ii. Cllr. White proposed that the amendment as narrated be moved. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. Talbot.
  - iii. A vote followed, which resulted in the motion being lost by a margin of 6 votes to 5.
  - iv. **RESOLVED:** That the amendment to the motion to increase Councillor's Allowances, be deferred until 2024/2025, having been lost, that St Osyth Parish Council consider the original proposal as moved by Cllr. White. The motion, proposed by Cllr. Thomas and seconded by Cllr. Ward was carried by a margin of 6 votes to 5.
- p. Cllr. White narrated his proposal of 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023:
  - i. *That in line with the Independent Remuneration Panel Report of Jan 2023 (confirmed on 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023) this Parish Council increases its Annual Member's Allowance to £600 and that the Chairmans allowance to £750.00. The travel and subsistence allowances should remain as existing in line with HMRC rules.*
  - ii. Cllr. White proposed that the amendment as narrated be moved. The proposal was seconded by Cllr. Talbot.
  - iii. A vote followed, which resulted in the motion being lost by a margin of 6 votes to 5.
  - v. **RESOLVED:** The motion to increase Councillor's Allowances having been lost, that St Osyth Parish Council retain the current amount paid by way of allowances to elected members, being that of £400.00 per Councillor and £600.00 for the Chairman, less annual increases. The motion, proposed by Cllr. Thomas and seconded by Cllr. Ward was carried by a margin of 6 votes to 5.

- q. The Chairman informed the Council that the payment of allowances in December could be seen as a sending out the wrong message, i.e. a gift, and therefore she felt that the date when allowances were paid should be reviewed.
  - i. The Clerk informed the Council that Harwich Town Council paid its Councillors in two instalments, in June and December.
  - ii. The RFO stated that this method made sense and that payment of Councillors allowances could mirror receipt of the Precept instalments from the District Council, i.e. April and October. The RFO continued that as it was approaching the middle of the financial year he would arrange for this year only, for the allowances to be paid in full in September.
  - iii. **RESOLVED:** That with effect from April 2024, Councillors allowances be paid in two instalments, in April and October respectively. The motion, proposed by Cllr. Thomas and seconded by Cllr. Moore. All agreed.
    - a) Cllr. Thomas wished it recorded that whilst she was proposing the payment of allowances in two instalments, she did not agree with the increase in allowances.
    - b) Cllr. Ward stated that she was totally against the idea of an increase in allowances, as Councillors should be there to help the residents, and not for financial gain.

The Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) departed the meeting at 9 pm.

**OM-23-109 ANTI-SOCIAL USE OF PERSONAL WATERCRAFT:**

At the request of the Chairman, the Clerk, by way of a laptop, showed two video clips provided by Cllr. Ball.

- a. Having been previously circulated, the Council reviewed correspondence from Brightlingsea Harbour Master, in which suggestions were made as to how the Parish Council could help to combat the problem of the anti-social use of Personal Watercraft (PWC).
  - i. Cllr. Ball stated that it would be good if the Parish Council could support the suggestions put forward by the Harbour Master, which she felt were sensible and achievable.
  - ii. The Chairman stated that it would be prudent to arrange a meeting with the Harbour Master to discuss his suggestions.
  - iii. Cllr. Ward informed the Council of an historical complaint, whereby nesting birds, having been present in large numbers, disappeared following the use of PWC within Ray Creek.
  - iv. Cllr. Moore stated that the problem would not be resolved without any form of legislation, and the only option was to record the details of those using PWC on the water. He continued that the use of PWC needed to be regulated and that the introductions of buoys to delineate an area for swimmers was one possible option.

- v. The Chairman requested that the Clerk liaise with Brightlingsea Harbour Master with a view to arranging a meeting to discuss the use of PWC.
- vi. Cllr. Ward enquired as to why, if the Tower Residents Association owned the ramp over the sea wall, they didn't just prevent access over the ramp, onto what was a Village Green.
  - a) A conversation ensued as to the history and use of the Village Green, especially access for motor vehicles.
  - b) The Clerk informed the Council that the legislation relating to Village Greens, the Inclosure Act and the Commons Act dated back to 1857 and 1876 respectively. The Clerk stated that he would forward further information to Councillors.
- vii. Cllr. Ball informed the Council that having spoken with some of those using PWC, it had been ascertained that they were from Stanstead.
- viii. Cllr. White informed the Council of correspondence from a member of the Essex Police Marine Unit, enquiring as to the progress of previous meetings to resolve the issue of the anti-social use of PWC.
  - a) Cllr. White added that the Parish Council had facilitated the meeting of interested parties, and that if any court action were to be taken, it should be instigated by the Police.
- ix. The Clerk informed the Council that the previous meetings had come to a halt as a result of a planning application for the installation of rock armour at Stone Point requiring the authorisation of the landowner, in this case The Orchards Holiday Park, which had not been obtained due to the park having been closed for the winter.
- x. A conversation followed as to the measures taken to date by the Harbour Master to control access to Stone Point. Having explained the process for registration with the Harbour Authorities, the Clerk suggested that perhaps residents of Point Clear or St Osyth, could on the production of a valid Council Tax invoice, register with the Harbour Master without incurring any charge.

At 9.20 pm, five members of the public left the meeting.

**OM-23-110 CLIMATE CHANGE:**

- a. The continued commitment of the Parish Council towards Climate Change was noted.

**OM-23-111 FURTHER MATTERS:**

- a. Cllr. French stated the Mandy Kelly would be missed by the Council. The Chairman stated that she would visit Ms Kelly.
- b. Cllr. Thomas informed the Council that the second applicant for the co-opted seat, had the day after the interview been taken ill. It was suggested that the Council send a 'get well soon' card.

- c. Cllr. Talbot informed the Council that he would be writing, as a District Councillor, to the Orchards Holiday Park with regards to the condition of the roads within Point Clear Bay. Cllr. Talbot stated that he would forward a copy of the correspondence to the Clerk for information purposes.
- d. Cllr. White reported the trees sponsored by the Women's Institute (WI) at Priory Meadow had been watered and were looking healthy. He continued that a resident of Park Road would be watering the trees on behalf of the WI.
- e. Cllr. Ball requested that she be included in any meeting with Brightlingsea Harbour Master.
- f. The Chairman informed the Council that she would be taking time off during the last two weeks of August, and therefore any Council business should be directed to Cllr. Ward in her capacity as Vice-Chairman.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 9.30 pm.

The date of the next meeting was set for 7.00 pm on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> September 2023, at St Osyth Village Hall.

**Summary of 'Action Required' from the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2023**

OM-23-094 a iii	Use of PRow by Cyclists	Clk to action
OM-23-094 b i	Liaison with Orchards Holiday Park	Clk to action
OM-23-094 e	LHP Application	Clk to action
OM-23-094 i	Amendment to Meeting Dates	Clk to action
OM-23-094 j i	Response from Cllr. Henderson	Dist Cllrs to action
OM-23-098 a i e)	Boundary Commission Review	Clk to submit objection
OM-23-098 a i e)	Boundary Commission Review	Mtg to be scheduled
OM-23-100 a ii	Alternative Burials	PC to discuss in Sep
OM-23-101 c ii	Use of CCTV	Clk to action
OM-23-102 c ii	Point Clear Crime Statistics	Chair/ Clk to action
OM-23-102 d ii	Details of PRow Officer	Clk to action
OM-23-103 b iii a)	Holes on Cowley Park	Clk/ CW to action
OM-23-109 a v	Meeting with Brightlingsea Harbour Master	Clk to action