



## ST OSYTH PARISH COUNCIL

### Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of the Council held at St Osyth Village Hall on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2024 at 7.05 pm



**PRESENT:** Chairman: Cllr. Karen Sinclair, Vice-Chairman: Cllr David Cooper  
Cllr's Clive Atkins, Alma Blockley, Ray French, Jake Moore &  
Michael Talbot

Cllr. Alan Goggin, Essex County Councillor (arrived at 8.00 pm)

**APOLOGIES:** Cllr. Susan Ball (Holiday)  
Cllr. Michele Thomas (Illness)  
Cllr. Catherine Venables (Family Commitment)  
Cllr. John White (Prior Engagement)

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

**PUBLIC PRESENT:** None

#### **OM-24-114 RESIGNATION OF A COUNCILLOR:**

Cllr. Talbot addressed the Council in respect of the resignation of Cllr. Julie Ward at the end of the meeting on 17<sup>th</sup> October 2024. Cllr. Talbot stated that Cllr. Ward had been a member of the Parish Council for 27 years and had also been a District Councillor. He continued that Cllr. Ward had always been someone to rely on and that she had added enormous value to the Parish Council, especially in recent years, when her standing, ability and enthusiasm had increased year on year.

- a. Cllr. Talbot requested the Clerk formally minute the appreciation of the Parish Council for all that Cllr. Ward had done, both for the Council and residents of the Parish of St Osyth, during her tenure as a Councillor. Cllr. Talbot concluded that Cllr. Ward would be missed by all members of the Council and wished her a happy retirement from the Council.
- b. **RESOLVED:** That the Parish Council formally accept the resignation of Cllr. Julie Ward. The motion was proposed by Cllr. Talbot and seconded by Cllr. Blockley. All agreed.

#### **OM-24-115 ELECTION OF THE VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE COUNCIL:**

The Chairman called for nominations for the appointment of Vice-Chairman. Cllr. Talbot moved that Cllr. Cooper be nominated as the Vice-Chairman of the Council, the nomination being seconded by Cllr. Atkins. Members unanimously agreed that Cllr. Cooper be elected Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council. Cllr. Cooper accepted the post and duly signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office.

- a. **RESOLVED:** That Cllr. David Cooper be elected Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council for the remaining term of 2024/2025.

**OM-24-116 PLANNING APPLICATIONS:**

	<b>APPLICATION &amp; ADDRESS</b>	<b>PROPOSAL</b>
a.	<a href="#">24/01040/LBC</a> Rev G Edwards The Cottage 60 Colchester Road St Osyth	Application for Listed Building Consent - treatment of damp chimney breast with lime render.  No Objections.
b.	<a href="#">24/01519/COUNOT</a> Mr R Gibbs Land off Heath Road St Osyth	Prior Approval Application under Part 3, Class Q of the Town and Country Planning (General Permitted Development) (England) Order 2015 (as amended) for conversion of an agricultural building into one dwelling.  No Objections.
c.	<a href="#">24/01520/TCA</a> St Osyth Parochial Church Council Church of St Peter & St Paul Church Square, St Osyth	1 No. Cedar - Crown lift, and 1 No. Prunus - remove lower branches to provide ground clearance of approximately 2.5m.  <b>Approved 15<sup>th</sup> November 2024</b>
d.	<a href="#">24/01561/VOC</a> St Osyth Priory Estate Limited St Osyth Priory The Bury St Osyth	Application under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act for Variation of Conditions 2 (Approved Plans) and Condition 3 (Materials) of application 18/01596/FUL to enable/allow details pertaining to the garage doors need to be amended in order to regularise the doors in situ.  Whilst there are no objections to this application, the Parish Council refers this matter to the District Council's Planning Team for consideration.
e.	<a href="#">24/01562/VOC</a> St Osyth Priory Estate Limited St Osyth Priory The Bury St Osyth	Application under Section 73 of the Town and Country Planning Act for Variation of Conditions 2 (Approved Plans), Condition 3 (Materials - Phase 1) and Conditions 4 (Materials - Phase 2) of application 18/01166/FUL to enable/allow details pertaining to the garage doors need to be amended in order to regularise the doors in situ.  Whilst there are no objections to this application, the Parish Council refers this matter to the District Council's Planning Team for consideration.
f.	<a href="#">24/01591/FULHH</a> Mr G Ilott Edenhurst Oakmead Road Point Clear	Householder Planning Application - Construction of outbuilding/shed.  Whilst the Parish Council has no objections to the actual construction of the outbuilding/ shed, Councillors object to the proposed location of the construction, which it is believed will impact on the street scene. The Council would have no objections to the construction of the outbuilding/ shed in the rear garden, which would be in keeping with the neighbouring properties.

g.	<a href="#">24/01597/FUL</a> Mr F Muggeridge Inky Lab Studios Limited 16 Beach Road, Lee Over Sands Point Clear	Planning Application - demolition and replacement of existing house with raised floor level to improve flood resilience to the one in 200-year flood event level (amended proposal following approved planning 23/01166/FUL).  No Objections.
h.	<a href="#">24/01621/FUL</a> St Osyth Priory Estate Marketing Suite West Field Lane St Osyth	Planning Application - Change of Use of sales and marketing suite to two bed dwelling under C1 use (holiday let).  No Objections.

**OM-24-117 PLANNING CORRESPONDENCE:**

The following correspondence was noted:

- a. Tendring District Council (TDC) weekly Notifications of Decisions (Determinations) for the period of 11<sup>th</sup> October 2024 to 8<sup>th</sup> November 2024.
- b. North Falls Offshore Wind Farm Community Newsletter of 31<sup>st</sup> October 2024.
- c. Correspondence of 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024 from the Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm Project with regard to the Notice of proposed changes to an accepted application for a Development Consent Order: Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm (application reference EN010115) – Regulation 7 of the Infrastructure Planning (Compulsory Acquisition) Regulations 2010.

**OM-24-118 APPROVAL OF MINUTES:**

**RESOLVED:** That having been previously circulated, the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting of 19<sup>th</sup> September 2024 be verified for accuracy by the Council and signed by the Chairman, as a true and accurate record. The motion was proposed by Cllr. Atkins and seconded by Cllr. Cooper. All agreed.

**OM-24-119 SUMMARY OF ACTION:**

- a. OM-24-102 g. The Clerk informed the Council that he would be meeting with the Chairman of Elmnden Rovers Youth Football Club, the week commencing 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024, to discuss a number of topics, including the availability of grant funding and parking on The Bury.
- b. OM-24-107 a ii. The Clerk informed the Council that he had would report on the installation of play equipment later in the meeting.
- c. OM-24-108 f ii. The Clerk informed the Council that he had written to Cllr. Tom Cunningham, the County Council’s Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure & Sustainable Transport, with regard to the authorities’ policy on the maintenance of verges and overgrown vegetation which posed a risk to the safety of residents, following a remark made by a representative of the Council at a recent meeting of the Tendring District Association of Local Councils (TDALC). The Clerk continued that Councillors would receive a copy of the correspondence, and hopefully the response of the Cabinet Member, at the meeting scheduled for 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024.

- d. OM-24-111. The Clerk informed the Council that he would report on the casual vacancy, together with the process for co-option, following the resignation of Cllr. Ward, later in the meeting.
- e. OM-24-113 a. The Clerk reported that the subject of a safe swimming area in Point Clear Bay would be raised by Cllr. Ball at the meeting scheduled for 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024.
  - i. The Chairman requested that the Clerk research the process for creating a safe swimming area ahead of the December meeting.
- f. OM-24-113 b i. The Clerk confirmed that he had written to the resident who had placed a fence on the verge outside of their property and that he had also reported the obstruction of the verge to Essex Highways.
- g. OM-24-113 c i. The Clerk confirmed that he had contacted the District Council with regard to concerns over the planning permission granted in respect of a business in Lee over Sands. The Clerk reported that having been contacted by an officer from the Licensing Department, it had been established that the licence granted for the 24/7 use of the actual dwelling was not associated with the approval of planning permission granted in 2022.

**OM-24-120 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION:** None

**OM-24-121 CORRESPONDENCE:**

The following correspondence was noted:

- a. Correspondence of 22<sup>nd</sup> October 2024 from Clacton on Sea Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Charity (Sands) with regard to the Baby Loss Awareness Week Ribbon Display.
- b. Correspondence of 1<sup>st</sup> November 2024 from Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) concerning the consultation in respect of Remote Meetings.
  - i. The Clerk stated that he would forward details of the consultation to Councillors.
- c. Consultation response of 5<sup>th</sup> November 2024 from St Osyth Parish Council to Essex Highways.
- d. Correspondence of 6<sup>th</sup> November 2024 from Deputy Clerk, in respect of comments made about Priory Meadow, during the recent servicing of the gym equipment.
- e. Correspondence of 9<sup>th</sup> November 2024 from Bruno Peek LVO OBE OPR Pageantmaster in respect of VE Day 80<sup>th</sup> Anniversary on 8<sup>th</sup> May 2025 (Beacon Lighting and singing of I Vow to Thee My Country).
- f. Invitation of 13<sup>th</sup> November 2024 from The Bread And Roses Barge to a social event on 30<sup>th</sup> November 2024, for which an RSVP was required.

## **OM-24-122 FINANCE:**

- a. Approval of payments for October 2024, as per the circulated lists were agreed by the Council.
- b. The following balances were noted and agreed:
  - i. Current a/c: £113,380.50
  - ii. Deposit: £150,000.00

## **OM-24-123 REPORTS FROM COMMITTEES:**

### **a. Finance Committee:**

- i. The Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of 16<sup>th</sup> October 2024 having been previously distributed, the Chairman invited questions. None were forthcoming.
- ii. The draft Minutes of the Finance Committee meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> November 2024 having been previously distributed, the Chairman invited questions. None were forthcoming.
- iii. The Chairman reported on the changes to the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) pay scales for 2024/2025 (effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024), as approved by the National Association of Local Councils (NALC).
  - a) **RESOLVED:** That St Osyth Parish Council accept and implement the recommendation for changes to the NJC pay scales for 2024/2025, as approved by NALC, effective from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2024. The motion was proposed by Cllr. Blockley and seconded by Cllr. Talbot. All agreed.

## **OM-24-124 REPORTS FROM WORKING GROUPS:**

### **a. Public Realm Working Party:**

- i. The Clerk informed the Council that the District Council had approved the release of the Public Open Spaces Contributions (POSC)/ Section 106 (s106) funds to offset the cost of new play equipment at Priory Meadow to the Parish Council, which had since been ordered.
- ii. The Clerk reported that the children's gym equipment was being installed on 4<sup>th</sup> December 2024 and that the activity tower and trail were to be installed the week commencing 16<sup>th</sup> December 2024.
- iii. By way of a PowerPoint presentation, the Clerk indicated where the respective items of play equipment were to be sited. He continued that fitness equipment was not intended to be in the immediate vicinity of children's playgrounds' and that a minimum separation of 25 metre's was required, or some other means of a clear separation, such as fence. However, as children's outdoor gym equipment was not considered as playground equipment, there was no guidance to distinguish between outdoor gym equipment provided for users under or above the 1.4 metre height threshold.

- iv. The Clerk added that the proposed layout of the gym equipment would likely flag up as 'low risk' during the Annual Safety Inspection, but that it could differ from one inspector to another.
- b. **Highways Working Party:** Although no report was given, Cllr. Cooper requested that the Clerk provide an update in respect of Stone Alley.
  - i. The Clerk reported that he intended to liaise with Cllr. Goggin with regard to the faded 'No Motor Vehicles' signs at either end of the alley, as having reported them as a defect to Essex Highways, the response of the latter had been that the signs were a low priority and would be considered for future non-urgent works.
  - ii. The Clerk informed the Council that he would also request the removal of the 'Except for Access' plates which were affixed to the posts supporting the 'No Motor Vehicles' signs. The Clerk continued that whilst he had been advised, verbally, that the plates could be removed, he had nothing in writing were there to be a challenge to the plates being removed by, for example, the Community Warden. The Clerk added that he did not want any criticism of the Parish Council and would therefore liaise with Cllr. Goggin.
  - iii. Cllr. Talbot enquired as to why the plates were being removed.
    - a) The Clerk stated that the plates were not listed on the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO) in respect of the alley and that there was no documentation as to why, when or by whom they were erected.
    - b) Cllr. Talbot stated that by parking in the alley, residents were not doing anything incorrect.
    - c) The Clerk stated that the TRO related purely to the 'No Motor Vehicles' signs and that by parking in the alley, the vehicles were causing an obstruction for those pushing buggies etc.
      - i) Cllr. Talbot stated that it depended on how the vehicles were parked.
      - ii) The Clerk reminded the Council of the conversation, during the site visit, with a young mother, who had commented on how problematic it was to use the alley at times, due to the number of vehicles and the way in which they were parked.
    - d) The Clerk reminded the Council of the statement from a Police Inspector who had stated that the 'Except for Access' plates were open to interpretation, as there was nothing to indicate how long a vehicle could be there. The Clerk add that the purpose of the TRO was to keep the alley free of traffic, so that it was accessible to those vehicles with a legal right to be there.
  - iv. The Clerk concluded that he would liaise with Cllr. Goggin.
- c. **Martin's Farm Country Park:** The notes of the meeting of 15<sup>th</sup> October 2024 having been previously distributed, the Chairman invited questions of Cllr. Atkins. None were forthcoming.

## OM-24-125 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES:

- a. **Allotments:** Nothing to report.
- b. **Community Matters & Well-being:** No report given.
- c. **Essex Police:** Having been previously circulated, Cllr. Cooper briefed the Council on reported crime during September 2024 in St Osyth and Point Clear, by offence and location, and where practicable the status of the investigation.
  - i. The Clerk reported that since the Council started receiving crime statistics in August 2014, there had been 6,540 reported crimes within the parish.
  - ii. The Clerk informed the Council that for the quarter July to September 2024, there had been 173 reported crimes, of which 96 involved violent or sexual offences.
  - iii. Cllr. Talbot commented that Cruce Way featured regularly on the crime statistics despite having only one property.
    - a) Cllr. Cooper reminded all present that the criteria for the location of a crime was 'on or near' which meant that the crimes may not have occurred in Cruce Way.
    - b) The Clerk stated that whilst reported as being at St Osyth Beach, in general the majority of crimes in that area actually occurred in the area of the pub at the junction of Beach Road and Seaview Road, not the holiday parks themselves.
- d. **Footpaths:** Nothing to report.
- e. **Tree Warden:** Cllr. Atkins informed the Council that, together with the Deputy Clerk, he had, on 13<sup>th</sup> November 2024, met with James Choat, the arboriculturist who had carried out the survey of the trees in the Cemetery.
  - i. Cllr. Atkins reported that whilst there was nothing major in the report, there were concerns over the condition of the holm oak, which would need a substantial reduction.
    - a) The Chairman enquired as to whether the tree had made any sort of recovery, given that there had been new growth on one side.
    - b) Cllr. Atkins stated that there had been no significant growth and that the tree would need to be reduced due to it overhanging the road and the chapel.
    - c) The Clerk reported that he had already requested a quote for the reduction of the tree, as per the specification submitted by James Choat.
  - ii. Cllr. Atkins reported that one other area of note was the basal growth, which had prevented James Choat from having a close inspection of the lime trees, some of which might be affected by *Kretzschmaria deusta* fungi, which caused the hollowing of the tree.

- a) The Clerk reported that he had already instructed a contractor to remove the basal growth, and that if another survey was required, he [the Clerk] would ensure that the basal growth was removed prior to the survey being conducted.
- iii. The Chairman reminded the Council that trees were being planted in the Cemetery at 10.30 am on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> November 2024.
  - a) Cllr. Atkins stated that in addition to the trees, there was approximately 25 metres of hedging to be planted, adding that he did not think it would take long to do both.
- f. **Tendring District Association of Local Councils (TDALC):** Cllr. Sinclair reported that the next meeting was scheduled for 27<sup>th</sup> November 2024.
- g. **District Councillor's Report:** Cllr. Talbot gave the following report:
  - i. Just in case as Councillors, you are asked about the opening hours of the recycling centres, the winter closing time of 4 pm has come into effect at the start of this month.
  - ii. Last night we had a member briefing session where Ian Davidson, the Chief Executive, gave a report to members on Devolution and other matters connected with this. He said there is still considerable pressure from Government to have at local government level, large authorities led by an Elected Mayor.
  - iii. I suppose it is understandable that Government would prefer to talk to one person and not, as in the case of Essex, to 15 Local Planning Authorities, including City, District, Borough, Unitary, and County Councils, and 12 District, Borough, or City Councils in Essex. I think it would be a great loss to lose the Essex we know, which as we all know well, was created under the Local Government Act 1888.
  - iv. There is also the possibility of our existing 12 authorities, being encouraged to a form new authorities by joining groups of Councils together to form a sort of Unitary Authority, with the consequential loss of officers and intense political argument about which officers should be employed by the enlarged authority. I will say no more, to muddy the water, but I have been through this before, as a Member of East Ham CBC, when Local Government was reorganised in 1964 and the London Borough Councils, we know of today were first created.
    - a) A discussion followed as to the effectiveness of and problems associated with the merging authorities.
  - v. After some recent flooding Essex County Council produced a report, which amongst other things said there were an estimated 8,500 properties in Essex at high risk of surface water flooding (i.e. NOT flooding from the sea). Certainly, a warning to concern residents in those areas, if the recent abnormal weather continues.
- h. **Website:** The Clerk reported that he would be liaising with the host of the website in the coming weeks to discuss progress.



## OM-24-126 REPORTS FROM NOMINATED REPRESENTATIVES & TRUSTEES:

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

- i. That the charity had met on 29<sup>th</sup> October 2024, during which time it had been confirmed that having had the roof checked, the works required were not as urgent as had first been suggested.
- ii. A quote for new back doors is being sought. The Charity is also seeking a quote for the blown plaster at the front of the Clacton Road properties.
- iii. That financially, the charity was doing well and could therefore wait to have the reported works carried out.

b. **St Osyth Playing Field Charity:** Nothing to report.

c. **Point Clear Community Association:**

In the absence of Cllr. Thomas, the Clerk narrated a report on the meeting of 14<sup>th</sup> November 2024:

- i. That attendance had improved, as like the Village Hall, if representatives of affiliated group did not attend at least two meetings per year, they would lose their affiliated status.
- ii. That a disabled ramp had been refurbished three times. It had initially been driven over, whilst wet, then had crumbled at the edge, then had been walked over by an animal, which had left multiple paw prints of varying depth.
- iii. That a new CCTV system had been installed.
- iv. That an air-to-air system was in the process of being installed, which meant the hall had to be closed for a week, hence the Parish Council meeting being held in the Village Hall. The official launch, of the carbon neutral venue, to be attended by members of the District Council and media presence was scheduled to take place in January 2025.
- v. That two new sets of fire doors had been ordered to improve the heat retention and efficiency of the air-to-air system. Additional new doors were still required.
- vi. That 'Multiply' courses were to be held. These would bring in additional revenue.
- vii. That the balances for the general account and grant account were £3,049.00 and £4,257.00 respectively.
- viii. That bookings were going well, with minimal availability during the week, but with scope for bookings at weekends.
- ix. That a craft fayre would be held in the hall on Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> November 2024, between 10 am and 2 pm.

- x. That following an initial negative response, it was now hoped that the Citizens Advice Bureau/ SOS bus, which had been visiting the Village Hall, would make use of Dumont Hall in 2025.
- d. **Village Hall Management Committee:** In the absence of Cllr. Thomas, the Clerk narrated a report on the Annual General and quarterly meetings of 30<sup>th</sup> October 2024:
  - i. Annual General Meeting:
    - a) The Chairman of the Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC) had given the following report:
      - i) That it had been a busy year, during which several former members had passed.
      - ii) Members were looking to change the charitable status to that of a Community Interest Company (CIC), however, more work was needed to complete the process.
      - iii) That the caretaker was still undertaking some duties.
      - iv) That two 'Multiply' courses had been held, with maths being taught during both a cookery and an art & wellbeing course. Two additional courses were being planned to increase numbers and thereby secure the full payment of the associated grant.
      - v) The roof was now sound, however, minor work was needed on the guttering.
      - vi) Notices for Dumont Hall were being displayed in the noticeboard as part of a reciprocal arrangement with the PCCA.
      - vii) That in general the historical problems associated with parking had improved, however, there were still the occasional issues during the school drop off and collection times.
    - b) The Treasurer had given the following report:
      - i) That the Management Committee was solvent, but continued maintenance, repairs and renewals ate into finances.
      - ii) Gas & electricity bills had reduced, which was believed to have been as a result of the new boilers. The long-term aspiration was for the installation of solar panels.
      - iii) The new roof on the Annex had cost just under £49,000.00, £25,000 .00 of which had come from reserves.
      - iv) The accounts had been audited ahead of submission to the Charities Commission.

- c) The Bookings Officer had given the following report:
  - i) That it had been a busy year with 634 bookings, of which 581 had gone ahead. More bookings had been confirmed up until the end of 2024. Any dates which were unavailable resulted in the potential hirer being referred to Dumont Hall.
  - d) During the election of officers, the Chairman, Treasurer, Bookings Officer and Premises Officer all volunteered to continue in their respective roles for another year.
- ii. Quarterly Meeting:
  - a) The Chairman had given the following report:
    - i) That in addition to the Mobile Library, which visited on the third Tuesday of each month, CAB/ SOS also wanted to start using the car park on a regular basis, with days and times to be confirmed.
    - ii) Future bookings included the return of a theatre company, for which an alcohol licence was being submitted, and further Covid injections.
    - iii) That the step by the fire doors, which should only be used in an emergency, but which were often used for unloading, at the front of the hall had been damaged and would be replaced with a ramp.
    - iv) That a Christmas Countdown 'Multiply' course would commence on 29<sup>th</sup> November and that the Rotary Club would be hosting 'Soup & Roll' events as of 12<sup>th</sup> November 2024.
  - b) The Treasurer had given the following report:
    - i) That as a result of a 5% increase in fees in 2023, finances were currently stable, therefore, there was no proposal to increase fees for the remainder of 2024/2025.
  - c) The Premises Officer had given the following report:
    - i) That issues with some electrics, plumbing and heating had all been resolved.
    - ii) That the fire extinguishers had been checked and that the fire alarm would be serviced in early November.
    - iii) That new blinds had been installed in the Annex.
    - iv) That with the exception of one group, all users of the hall were insured, with most having their own insurance policies.
    - v) That bouncy castles were no longer permitted.

- vi) That the last quiz of the year was being held on 16<sup>th</sup> November 2024.
- vii) The meeting concluded at 8 pm. The date of the next meeting was to be confirmed, pending receipt of documentation pertaining to the change in charitable status.

#### **OM-24-127 MANAGEMENT PLAN:**

- a. The draft Management Plan for 2025/2026 having been previously distributed, and at the request of the Chairman, the Clerk informed the Council that the draft document contained all projects/ items as submitted by the relevant Committees, Working Parties and responsible Councillors. The Clerk continued that almost all costings had been obtained, which would enable the Responsible Financial Officer (RFO) to start preparing a draft budget. This, the Clerk continued, would form the basis for the Precept demand for 2025/2026, which could potentially mean an increase to the Precept or items within the Management Plan being deferred.
- b. The Chairman stated that, as in previous years, the Council needed to agree the Management Plan in principle, subject to scrutiny of full costings by the Finance Committee at its meeting in December 2024.
- c. **RESOLVED:** That having been discussed, the Council approve the Management Plan, in principle, for 2025/2026. The motion was proposed by Cllr. Moore and seconded by Cllr. French. All agreed.

#### **OM-24-128 CASUAL VACANCY - CO-OPTION OF A PARISH COUNCILLOR:**

The Clerk informed the Council of the process for the filling of the casual vacancy resulting from the resignation of Cllr. Ward. The Clerk stated that he would, on Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2024, forward to TDC the Notice of Vacancy which would be displayed as of 25<sup>th</sup> November 2024, and that an election would be held if, within 14 days (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and bank holidays) after the date of the notice, a request for an election to fill the vacancy was made to the Returning Officer by 10 electors or more.

- a. The Clerk continued that if no request for an election was received, the Parish Council would then be instructed to fill the vacancy by way of co-option. The Clerk stated that if this was the case, he would look to submit an article advertising the vacancy in the January 2025 edition of St Osyth Life.
- b. The Clerk reminded the Council that he had received an application for co-option in respect of the vacancy for Point Clear, from a resident of St Osyth. He added that if there was no call for an election, and following interview the applicant was co-opted to the Council, it would make sense to appoint them to the vacancy in St Osyth and readvertise for the vacancy in Point Clear.

#### **OM-24-129 REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES:**

- a. **Essex County Council:** Having arrived at 8.00 pm, and his report having been previously circulated, Cllr. Goggin invited questions or comments.

- i. The Chairman stated that whilst beneficial to receive the report from Cllr. Goggin, there little mention of St Osyth in this month's report.
  - a) Cllr. Goggin acknowledged this, stating that as the St Osyth meeting fell on the same night as that of Brightlingsea Town Council (BTC), he compiled a combined report which covered both parishes, in the same way as he did for the other three Councils in his electoral division.
  - b) Cllr. Talbot stated that despite there being little mention of St Osyth this month, the format of the reports provided by Cllr. Goggin was clear and concise, especially given that he [Cllr. Goggin] elaborated on points of note.
- ii. Cllr. Goggin reported that one of the topics discussed at the BTC meeting earlier that evening, had been that of Devolution.
  - a) The Chairman stated that Cllr. Talbot had briefed the Council on the subject of Devolution during his District Council report.
  - b) Cllr. Goggin stated that he had been made aware of developments, of which he was not aware, at the BTC meeting.
  - c) Cllr. Goggin reminded the Council of the concept of Devolution, which having been discussed for the past two years, was still very much on the agenda. He continued that all counties had been asked for their views, and that in the case of Essex, the County Council was not interested in what was good for itself or other local authorities, but rather what was best for the residents. Cllr. Goggin stated that whilst Essex had expressed an interest in the scheme, it had ultimately said no as the funds being offered were not enough. He cited Suffolk & Norfolk, which having said yes to Devolution, had now been advised by the government that the plan submitted was not ambitious enough.
  - d) Cllr. Goggin reported that were Devolution in Essex to be pushed through, the County Council elections scheduled for May 2025, would not take place. He continued that a White Paper was to be published shortly, but that should the elections not take place and be deferred by one, or more than likely two years, they would clash with those of the District and Parish Councils, due in May 2027.
  - e) Cllr. Goggin stated that currently Essex did not include the Unitary Authorities of Southend or Thurrock. Should Devolution go ahead, these two authorities would join Essex under the banner of Greater Essex. He added that whilst Parish Councils would more than likely remain unaffected, there was a very real possibility that District Councils could go, or in the case of Tendring be merged with Colchester and Maldon, which would bring about significant savings on the cost of both staff and Councillors.
  - f) Cllr. Goggin stated that he was not aware of any changes since the last County Council meeting, so could not speculate as to the information provided at the BTC meeting.

He added that he did not know whether Devolution would affect the proposed changes to Electoral Boundaries, due in May 2025.

- g) Cllr. Talbot provided an overview of the discussion in respect of Devolution at the District Council meeting of 20<sup>th</sup> November 2024, in addition to the historical reorganisation of Local Government in 1964, when the London Borough Councils, as known today, were first created.
  
- iii. Cllr. Goggin reported on the Member-Led Repair Programme (MLRP), which he stated he was keen to see continue. Cllr Goggin stated that the Clerk had submitted a list of defects for December, and that due to the increase in the number of potholes being repaired, the scheme might include the repair of pavements, and possibly street furniture. He continued that this was akin to Devolution insofar as the Parish Council and he were deciding on the defects to be put forward for repair.
  - a) Cllr. Cooper narrated an extract from the press release which had accompanied Cllr. Goggin's report, which stated that the MLRP had included pothole and pavement repairs, kerbs installations, sign replacements and re-freshing white carriageway lines.
  - b) In referring to Stone Alley, Cllr. Talbot suggested that the scheme might extend to the removal of signs.
    - i) The Clerk stated that he would liaise with Cllr. Goggin.
  
- iv. Cllr. Goggin reported that the changes to the speed limit along the B1027, in the vicinity of Westwood Park, were still on hold, pending the outcome of the review by the Coroner.

**OM-24-130 FURTHER MATTERS:**

- a. Cllr. French informed the Council of a recent incident at the Rush Green Road Recycling Centre, when he had observed four elderly residents, all of whom had mobility issues, struggle to place items in the skips. Cllr. French enquired of Cllr. Goggin as to whether the site could be provided with low level skips, similar to those which had been used at the former recycling centre at Martin's Farm.
  - i. Cllr. Talbot stated that he was surprised to hear this, as the staff at the recycling centre had been instructed to assist those with mobility issues or disabilities. Having remarked that that he was amazed that no members of staff had helped, Cllr. Talbot apologised to Cllr. French and stated that he [Cllr. Talbot] would raise the matter with TDC.
  - ii. Cllr. Goggin stated that Cllr. French was not the first person to mention this problem, but that his [Cllr. Goggin] own experience of the site was very good. He continued that he had suggested that the addition of a tick box on the booking form to indicate whether assistance was required.

- b. The subject having been raised by Cllr. Atkins, the Chairman informed the Council that the Deputy Clerk would again be buying a large Christmas card for all members of the Council and staff to sign, and to donate to a local charity, should they so wish.
- c. The Chairman reported that she had been asked by Cllr. Ball to narrate a report on behalf of the Point Clear Bay Interest Group (PCBIG). The Chairman stated that rather than read the report aloud, she would provide Councillors with a copy of the report, about which they could raise any questions or comments with Cllr. Ball at the December meeting.

There being no further business the meeting was closed at 8.24 pm.

The date and time of the next meeting was set for 7.00 pm on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> December 2024, at St Osyth Village Hall.

**Summary of 'Action Required' from the Minutes of the Ordinary Meeting held on Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November 2024**

OM-24-119 e i	Safe Swimming Areas	Clk to action
OM-24-121 b i	Remote Meetings Consultation	Clk to action
OM-24-124 b iv	Stone Alley	Clk to action
OM-24-130 a i	Rush Green Road Recycling Centre	Cllr. Talbot to action
OM-24-130 c	Point Clear Bay Interest Group	Cllr. Ball to action