



7.30pm

Chair: Cllr Barnes

In attendance: Cllr Borges, Cllr Aldred, Cllr Westrope, Cllr Mackenzie, Cllr Hill, Cllr Rust and Cllr Garrod

Clerk: Mrs Julia Howard

Members of the public: Six

Draft Minutes

26/013 Welcome and to receive apologies for absence - apologies received from Cllr Lacey and Cllr Schwier.

26/014 Declarations of Interest - Chair Cllr Barnes declares a pecuniary interest re: 26/023

26/015 To approve the minutes (previously circulated) of the Parish Council meeting held on 8th January 26

RESOLVED Proposed by Cllr Borges seconded Cllr Hill, all in agreement by show of hands.

The Chair then proposed to move item 26/020 to the end of the meeting due to the number of members of public present. This was agreed by all by nod of head.

26/016 Question Time

Information

1. Raised concerns over the flooding and pot holes. The pot holes are being filled by sticky tarmac which seems to wash out and then contractors are required to come and fix it again. They also enquired as to the progress of the quiet lane at the Endway / Maltings lane. The Chairman provided an update on the quiet lane; the PC has a purchase order drafted for ECC to undertake the speed / traffic flow survey which will be submitted this month.
2. Raised concerns over the proposed withdrawal of the bus service (320 and 321), which would leave residents unable to get to schools, shops, medical services and the ageing population becoming isolated. Could the 319 divert to include this village also.
3. Asked for support in relation to the bus service. Quoted bus service bill 2014, that lifeline bus services can't be removed without alternative provision being available. The government wants to reduce cars on the road, but without a bus service this is nearly impossible. They use the bus to get to Safron Walden and for access to train travel to London.
4. Enquired about the PC's Flood Action Group, and whether the farmer who leases the land that causes the flooding, Cllr Mackenzie provided an update that communication has been made but the ditches have not yet been cleared. Emergency services can't get to parts of the village when the flooding is bad.

26/017 Invitation to Cllr Peter Schwier, Essex County Council and Cllr Diana Garrod, Braintree District Council to address the meeting on matters of mutual interest.

Cllr Garrod gave a summary of her report which is on the PC's website. Road closures coming up in Sturmer and Birdbrook. Potholes have been escalated and Cllr Garrod urged people to report bad potholes. Garden waste billing is due to be renewed, new recycling bins are being delivered and collection will commence in June. The Local Plan update for BDC is being renewed, the consultation (regulation 18) is due to commence on or around 19th February for six weeks the PC should consider whether they want a 'green buffer' between new significant new estates and referred to the Catesby estates proposal bordering Essex, Suffolk and Cambridge from Bumpstead/Sturmer and Haverhill. Cllr Garrod will request that Haverhill library is included in the consultation.

ECC elections scheduled for May 2026. Cllr Garrod also spoke about the bus service withdrawal and consultation. The full Council meeting re: budget is next week, BDC are proposing to freeze their portion of the Council tax (to be agreed at the meeting) and further support for the cost-of-living fund. Councillor Community Grants are planned to go up to £1500 / year.

Cllr Borges asked with regard to the Local plan for Cllr Garrod to enquire about the spatial need identified within the Neighbourhood plan; without post office (and bank), GP and now possibly losing the bus service, the village becomes unsustainable. Cllr Garrod advised that the PC should write to the Planning Policy team with regard to this and Cllr Borges will draft a letter for submission.

26/018 Bus Consultation update / termination - we have had a lot of correspondence about this including communication from neighbouring PC's and residents. The reason for removing the service is because of cost, they would need approx. £11 subsidy per person and only £5/person is available so it is considered beyond reasonable use of public money.



Chair Cllr Barnes contacted BBC Essex and put forward our points on the removal of the service, starting with being overlooked in the initial consultation due to an oversight where Steeple Bumpstead was not thought to be in the Braintree area. Some of the 320/321 buses are full where others are empty, perhaps readjusting the timetable would be a more sensible step in reducing the costs but still providing a valuable service. There were 690 responses on the consultation for the 320/321 which was more than all the other buses in the survey, even with Steeple Bumpstead having been missed from the consultation. Radwinter in particular has put forward a very good petition covering all the key points.

Cllr Garrod also suggested contacting Digi-Go who currently don't cover this area, but in other areas assists people getting to doctors' appointments etc.

Chair Cllr Barnes will Contact Stephenson's buses to see whether they have thoughts on how to make this route viable and will check how often the 319 runs to try to ascertain how it is viable but the 320/321 isn't. The 319 was shown to be more well used, possibly because there are fewer journeys. There were no figures on the survey results. The removal of the 320/321 bus route is cutting out job opportunities, if residents can get to Audley end they could get train to Stanstead, where new employment opportunities are being created.

Chair Cllr Barnes will raise our concerns to Dominic Colins at Braintree DC.

Appendix d of consultation 319/320/321 shows that 690 responses were made. Which is far higher than ALL of the responses for the other buses in the consultation. The Clerk has shared the current consultation on the PC's Facebook page.

26/019 Financial Matters To note and Decision

Item 1. To note receipts and approve upcoming payments as circulated, and to note the bank reconciliation has been passed to Cllr Hill to check.

RESOLVED Proposed to approve by Cllr Mackenzie, seconded by Cllr Aldred, all in agreement by show of hands.

Item 2. Cllr training (update) – Cllr Aldred is awaiting an email response for this, it is £583 for one 2-hour week day session, Monday - Thursday, weekend sessions are price on application. Cllr Aldred will update by email when she hears back.

Item 3. IT Update (.gov emails, MS365 and website) the website and emails are now working, the old website has a redirection message. MS365 for .gov will need to be purchased

The next item moved to the end of the meeting.

26/020 Recruitment update / appointment - (Closed Item members of the press and public are asked to leave for the completion of these items and may return afterwards) Decision

Item 1. Parish Clerk and RFO – to agree to appoint suggested applicant, to start on 2nd March.

RESOLVED Proposed by Chairman Cllr Barnes, seconded by Cllr Mackenzie, there were some discussions and then a vote held, all in agreement by raised hands.

Item 2. Handyman Assistant – to appoint 2 assistants for a period of 3 months at 2 hours per week.

RESOLVED To appoint the first applicant proposed by Chairman Barnes, seconded by Cllr Mackenzie and agreed by all.

It was not resolved to appoint the second applicant, proposed by Chairman Barnes, there was no seconder and this decision has been deferred until the March PC meeting to allow further enquiries.

26/021 Planning

Applications –

Validated Planning Applications			
Number	Address	Postcode	Details
26/00044/TPOCON	Schoolings 20 Church Street	Cb9 7DG	Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: T1 - Prunus Avium, crown reduce by approx 1/3, height reduction 1-2 metres and lateral spread reduction 1 metres T2 - Acer Pseudoplatanus, crown reduce by approx 1/3, height reduction 2-3 metres and lateral spread reduction 1-2 metres T3 - Salix Caperal, Reduce lateral spread by 1-2 metres

The PC doesn't make comment on TPO applications.



Decisions

Validated Planning Applications

Number	Address	Postcode	Details	Status
25/02859/TPOCON	Portobello House , 2 Chapel Street	CB9 7DQ	Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: T1- Acer: Crown reduce by approximately one third, removing 1 metre from the height and 0.5 metres from the lateral spread. T2- Acer pseudoplatanus: Pollard back to previous pollard points.	no objections raised

26/022 Zion / Grass cutting programme – Cllr Aldred has spoken to Zion regarding the start date for cutting which is weather dependant. The bare area by the football goal will be attended to shortly. Cllr Aldred will keep in touch with them. The hedge by the hall needs trimming, if Zion are in the area they can be asked to do this as it's in their contract. Otherwise Ben could do a light trim.

26/023 Booking of the Camping Close and Review of new play equipment at the Camping Close

1. The PC met with the Football clubs, it was a productive meeting and they will keep in touch via a new WhatsApp group, they are looking to get new multi-use goals and may look to apply for a grant from the PC, the DC Councillor Grant or the Village Hall. They will need to be stored safely. It was agreed there will be no games during June and July each year, some games may be played in August but first refusal will go to the PC and Village Hall, and then the season will open in September when the football teams have first refusal. It was also agreed that football teams from outside of Bumpstead will not be permitted to use the pitch, there are currently 4 teams playing on the pitch and it would create over use.
2. VH customer booking on Saturday 15th Aug, they will donate £100 towards picnic benches.
3. The Camping close carpark will be used by the staff of the primary school for 5 weeks whilst their carpark is redone
4. Review of the new equipment, the clerk and OSWG have drafted a report (circulated) which needs some more information added and then we will write to the complainant / send the report, or even arrange to meet with them.

The clerk read a draft report, Cllr Rust corrected that the VH is utilising a camera already in place, the equipment has been monitored by Cllr Rust, the Zip wire was used after school and 5 times over the weekend by families and young children, used just over an hour in total over the whole weekend. Today there were no children using the zip wire, whilst the play areas were very busy. No adults or older children used the equipment. It is used in short bursts and was not misused. The OSWG will continue to monitor over half term and when the weather picks up. The Chairman spoke to one of the neighbours and whilst it can be heard it is not disruptive, the sounds of balls and children playing and school playground is more noticeable. The PC will look to see what options and costs of barriers / hedging is possible.

5. Picnic benches – we have £149.81 in the account, plus £40 coming for advertising, I have some money to bank from the collection jars and Cllr Rust has some money too. More funds should come from the village showcase and further advertising. The clerk has a poster which could be printed and delivered to businesses

26/024 Actions from Working Groups meeting

Decision

Post office update – The Chair has made contact with the Finchingfield Post Mistress, who says it will need funding and we will need to contact an area co-ordinator, which the Chairman has done and is awaiting a response.

A memorial plaque for the bench that's just been installed is due to be ordered. - Chair

Plaque holders have been made for the avenue of memorial trees, plaques need to be engraved – Cllr Mackenzie

Additional signage for the Camping Close – Cllr Rust and Ben

Trim trail measurements – Cllr Rust

Keter shed installation – Cllr Rust

OTHER ITEMS FOR DISCUSSION

26/025 Events – Village showcase, Annual Community Bulb Planting

– Cllr Rust is leading on the Village Showcase, he has had a first meeting and would like to make this more interactive, perhaps to include a BBQ, possibly a bar, the clerk will check whether this is legal (an option would be for the VH to run the Village Showcase and invite the PC), any other thoughts/ ideas to Cllr Rust please.

Annual community bulb planting – this will be planned for November 26. In the meantime, we are asking for the current planted areas to be photographed / surveyed and spaces that aren't planted up. The gardening club and Bumpstead in Bloom are going to also do a Snowdrop planting session for the wooded area by the village hall.

Volunteers are also asked to come forward to 'adopt a planter' to keep them watered and weeded, the plot by the village school will be worked on, possibly as a wildflower area/ rockery and the quince tree is to be labelled.



26/026 Update on outstanding actions from previous meeting/s

Quiet lane at the Endway/Hill lane and Maltings Lane – Sturmer PC has been asked to support this and the clerk has drafted a Purchase order to request the speed survey. Not heard back from Sturmer PC yet.

The meeting then reverted back to item 26/020.

26/027 Information Sharing

Cllr Borges – None, Cllr Aldred – the library is doing well and well attended, Cllr Westrope – holes/rubble at the footpath area by the telephone exchange and the hedge needs trimming back, this is not the PC's responsibility as it is private land (Poppyfields), Cllr Rust – none, Cllr Mackenzie – would like the PC to pay for the planning application for new lighting to the outside of the Moot Hall, to be added to March agenda. Cllr Hill – the waste bin by Bellropes has fallen off, could Ben site the bin back onto one of the nearby posts.

26/028 Meeting Close & Date of Next meeting – 12th March. Meeting closed at 21.59.

RFO (Finance) REPORT & payments list – 8th Jan 26 – 5th Feb 26

Upcoming Payments / Invoices pending (for approval):
 £1004.22 – Parish Council Websites, balance and subscription charges
 £48 +VAT – Eden print for herb planter notices

Regular pre-approved Payments (monthly unless stated)
 £64.00 - Moot Hall (per month)
 £1704.58 Zion Landscapes LTD

Account Balances as at 05/02/26

Current Account:	£3,634.39
Savings Account:	£22,476.41
Total	£26,111.00

*Earmarked Reserves:	£4,378.79	– War memorial
	£27,537.00	– Churchyard wall repair fund
	£1,305.00	– Maintenance to Assets
	£3,200.01	– Tree Surveys and Maintenance
	£65.41	- Community Herb Planter (Grant)
	£149.81	- Picnic benches

Savings Account (005) * Total: **£36,636.02**

Clerk's notes:

1. Clerk has applied for a Unity Bank account but has left this on hold pending the new clerk.
2. At the end of the financial year the proportionate amount of Transferred bank interest from the Earmarked account moved into the savings account will be added to the war memorial fund.
3. Clerk is purchasing herb planter signage and will spend the remaining funds in earmarked account
4. The credit of £1931.75 paid into the current account in error was returned.
5. The clerk moved £34 from July's Ice Cream van donation over to the picnic bench fund
6. £40 is coming in for 2 adverts in the notice board and will be added to the picnic bench fund when it is received
7. Barclays has sent a change of terms document as they are moving us to a business account
8. Bank reconciliation has been passed to Cllr Hill for checking.

Receipts		Payments	
January 2026			
		Clerk Milage allowance 4	£ 64.80
		Received in Error and returned to K Pestell	£ 1,931.75
		GCS trading concrete base	£ 540.00
		Clerk phone contribution	£ 5.00
		Npower	£ 151.08
		Moot Hall	£ 64.00
		ZION landscapes ltd	£ 1,704.58
		NEST	£ 69.55
		Clerk Wages	£ 1,076.89
		Wages - Handyman 2	£ 131.45
Sub-total	£0		£5,739.10
February 2026			
Sub-total	£0		£0
TOTALS	£0		£ 5,739.10