

BOXTED PARISH COUNCIL
PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
MAY 2017

ANNUAL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING

The Minutes of the Meeting held on Wednesday 4th May 2017 at Boxted Village Hall, Cage Lane, Boxted Colchester, commencing at 8.00pm, after the closure of the Annual Parish Meeting

	<u>Present</u>
Chairman: Councillor H Large	Yes
Vice Chairman: Councillor Mrs C Damen	No
Councillors:	
Councillor G Pugh	No
Councillor Mrs A McLauchlan	Yes
Councillor Mrs L Carpenter	Yes
Councillor M Parratt	Yes
Councillor J Collitt	Yes
Councillor Mrs V Banwell	
ONE VACANT SEAT	
Staff: Clerk to the Council Denise Humphris	Yes

Colchester Borough Councillor Nigel Chapman and eight members of the public

- 001/17** **APPOINTMENT OF CHAIRMAN FOR MUNICIPAL YEAR May 2017- April 2018**
RESOLVED: to appoint Hugh Large and receive his Declaration of Acceptance of Office
- 002/17** **APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN FOR THE YEAR May 2017 – April 2018**
RESOLVED: to appoint Cheryl Damen
- 003/17** **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE RESOLVED:** to accept apologies for absence from Councillor Mrs C Damen and Councillor G Pugh.
- 004/17** **CO-OPTION OF NEW COUNCILLOR**
RESOLVED: (unanimously) to appoint Mrs V Banwell to one of the vacant positions and to Receive her Declaration of Acceptance of Office and completed Register of Interests.
- 005/17** **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** None
- 006/17** **THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY 12TH APRIL 2017**
RESOLVED: to approve the minutes (previously circulated) as a true record for signature by the Chairman.
- 007/17** **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION** - None
- 008/17** **CLERK'S REPORT**
The Clerk reported as follows:

Planning – Some planning application notifications have not been received. Colchester Borough Council Officers have confirmed the applications that we should be consulted on and will ensure that we receive these in the future. Camping Close Charity – no progress has been made at present as we are awaiting a Valuation report on the land. The PCC have been advised of the issues surrounding the land and whilst no official response has been sent it seems likely that they will oppose any actions by the Council to dispose of this land and/or purchase this themselves. Until this matter is resolved then the Charity monies of around £55k remain dormant.

009/17 **BOROUGH AND COUNTY COUNCIL MATTERS**

Nothing specific to report

010/17 **POLICY DOCUMENTS**

RESOLVED: to adopt policy documents for use by the Council, as presented by the Clerk as follows:

- Financial Regulations
- Standing Orders
- Freedom of Information
- Complaints Procedure
- Retention of Records
- Co-option of councillors policy
- Grievance Policy
- Disciplinary Policy
- Equal Opportunities Policy.
- Web site content and updating policy

- Grants and Donations policy

011/17 **MEETING DATES**

RESOLVED: meetings will be held on the second Wednesday of each month commencing at 7.00pm at Boxted Village Hall except for August and December when no meeting will be held.

012/17 **BANKING AND AUDIT ARRANGEMENTS**

a) Bank Mandates: RESOLVED: mandate to be amended to include two out of three signatories: Councillor McLauchlan; Councillor Pugh and Councillor Large.

b) Online Access to bank Account and Authority Levels.

RESOLVED: this is to be restricted to RFO only who may set up and release all payments in line with internal audit procedures.

c) Internal Audit Procedures: RESOLVED: to approve internal audit procedures document prepared by the Clerk.

d) Councillor Audit Checks The Clerk emphasised that it is really important for councillors to understand their responsibilities and to ensure that regular audit checks are undertaken. Using Google Drive files all bank statements and other financial information will now be freely available to all councillors and in the absence of one delegated councillor to undertake the checks it is incumbent

upon all councillors to take time to periodically check finances which will be an agenda item at each forthcoming meeting to ensure that at least one councillor has checked this each month. The Clerk has prepared a guide to assist councillors in checking transactions which was noted.

e) Standing Order and Direct Debit Payments.

RESOLVED: to approve Standing Order and Direct Debit payments as follows:

Clerks salary monthly (Standing Order); Essex County Council Pension Contributions monthly (Standing Order); - Payment to Clerk monthly re contribution to telephone/broadband) £4 fixed until November 2018) Monthly amounts to be reported at monthly council meetings.

Information Commissioners Office Annual Direct Debit re Annual Data Protection Registration (amount to be reported at relevant monthly council meeting
Community Hub: Standing Orders: Assistant Clerk's monthly salary; Handyman Monthly Salary; Cleaner Monthly salary.

Direct Debits: Anglian Water (half yearly) EON electric (monthly)

013/17

PLANNING

PLANNING Members considered the following planning application submitted to Colchester Borough Council and **RESOLVED:** to comment as follows:

APPLICATION NUMBER	ADDRESS	DETAILS OF APPLICATION	PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS
170997	Land at Hill House Carters Hill Boxted	Outline Planning Application including details of access and layout for 36 residential dwellings public open space landscaping new access and highways, associated and ancillary development.	NO OBJECTIONS

There were some concerns about the impact of parking on school traffic and it was agreed to contact County Councillor Anne Brown to see if she can pursue matters with the school with regards to parking.

APPLICATION NUMBER	ADDRESS	DETAILS OF APPLICATION	PARISH COUNCIL COMMENTS
171006	3 Alberry Cottages Church Street Boxted	Demolition of Outbuilding and single storey extension	NO OBJECTIONS

014/17

ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS

Essex Association of Local Councils: **RESOLVED:** to approve the Annual subscription April 2017 – March 2018 £359.51

015/17

PLAY EQUIPMENT RECREATION GROUND

a) Annual Independent Play Inspections – Quotes to be obtained for

consideration.

b) Swing is broken and will be removed whilst overall review of the play area is considered to include all required works.

016/17

BOXTED COMMUNITY HUB

a) New Hub Tenants. The existing tenant is vacating on 31st May not 30th June as advised in her resignation letter. The new tenants have confirmed that they can take over with effect from 5th June. The Clerk is attending to the takeover – return of keys, new leases etc.

b) New cooker. A quote has been received for the new commercial cooker and extractor fan costing just around £2500 plus VAT. Cheaper quotes will be researched, particularly as we can no longer reclaim VAT but as the cooker needs to be installed between the dates when the old tenant leaves and new tenant begins to cause the least inconvenience options may be limited. It was agreed that due to the high use of the cooker in the Hub this does need to be a commercial cooker, which, of course, will be costlier. The new 3 phase electric point which will take the cooker and cooker installation will cost around £500 and will ensure that we do not have further problems with fuses tripping. Costs can be covered from the remaining £6000 grant funding we have to claim and/or the funds received from the sale of the tractor and gang mower. **RESOLVED:** to approve the purchase and installation

c) Following the sale of the tractor and gang mower to a local resident for £2500, we now need to clear out the garage and loft spaces. Additionally, the sports teams' storage spaces are in need of de-cluttering and The Clerk's Assistant is attempting to deal with the issues of lack of storage space. **RESOLVED:** to hire a skip to enable clearance.

d) Car Park Gates Handyman has advised that he no longer wishes to open and close the Village Hall Gates on a daily basis even though he was being paid 1.5 hours per week to do this. In the absence of any volunteers we are reliant on users to open and close the gates.

e) The two resident Football Team have asked for a letter signed by the Parish Council to confirm that we are happy for them to obtain, use and store new portable floodlights on site. This is to support their application to the F.A for grant funding. The Clubs have advised that the existing lights are not user friendly being heavy and cumbersome and some are now not working. **RESOLVED:** to approve this

f) RCCE Village Hall and Buildings Affiliations – Annual Subscription. **RESOLVED:** to approve the Annual Subscription of £50.

g) New and Renewal Leases. The Clerk is attending to new and renewal leases and re-writing the hiring agreements for the Sports Clubs. All leases and agreements will be accompanied by a management document setting out users' responsibilities and Council responsibilities. This will include obtaining written confirmation from all users of their understanding of their personal responsibilities with regards Health and Safety, Fire evacuation procedures etc.

h) The Clerk's Assistant has arranged for 'handyman' supplies to be provided by Dovercourt DIY on account to avoid herself and Handyman having to purchase items needed and then re-claiming. Orders will be subject to usual Financial Regulations and approval by the Clerk prior to purchase.

017/17

BOXTED VILLAGE HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

a) It was noted that the existing voluntary Trustees are all to resign on 31st July 2017 and that despite extensive local advertising no volunteers can be found to replace them.

b) The Council considered that the Village Hall is a much-needed Community Asset which would revert to the Church (as it is on Church leased land) in the event that no-one could be found to run it. It was **RESOLVED:** that the Parish Council should take over as Trustee of the Charity and the Clerk was asked to investigate the practicalities and resources and costs of the Council taking this Community Asset on ready for June meeting due to the limited timescales involved, which would mean if this is to happen the Parish Council should be ready to take over on 1st August 2017.

018/17

FINANCIAL AND ACCOUNTING

a) Year-end 31st March 2017. Draft year-end figures show income of £66794 which includes around £14000 of income from Hub Hirers, and £9000 grant funding, with further grant funds of around £6k to come this would make total income of £73k against payments of £80484. However, £80484 includes the closing balance of the NDP £11801 transferred back to Colchester Borough Council so the actual outgoings figure is £68683, leaving year end bank balance of approximately £8k. All year end budgets are on track and accurate apart from Staff Costs and this is due to new staff employed during the year which had not been planned for at the beginning of the year.

Final figures for sign off will be available at the June meeting with the internal audit scheduled for Friday 23rd June 2017.

b) Financial Report 1st April -Date.

The Clerk reported bank balances as follows:

c) Payment of invoices – RESOLVED: to approve the payment of invoices as per attached Appendix 'a' totalling £ 5453.82 current account and £1151.28 community Hub.

019/17

TIME AND DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be Wednesday 14th June 2017 at Boxted Village Hall Cage Lane Boxted.

020/16

EXCUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC – PART B MINUTES

RESOLVED: to exclude the press and public from the discussion of the following items because of the likelihood that confidential information could be disclosed

021/16

Category 1 Update re staffing contracts

Community Hub Staffing

Assistant to the Clerk – With the Fixed Term contract due to end on 30th June 2017 the trial has been deemed to be a success and the Clerk advised that she

felt it would be impossible to continue without this much-needed additional member of staff taking on day to day management issues and relieving the Clerk of previously unpaid hours. The Clerk and Assistant Clerk explained the difficulties managing the Hub which is open 7 days per week and dealing with conflicting queries and demands of five separate users and it was agreed that in order to ensure all tasks can be completed effectively without putting undue pressure on staff 15 hours per week is needed. Whilst there were concerns about rising staff costs it was accepted that without paid staff to manage it, the Hub could not continue.

The Clerk provided income projections for the 2017-2018 year of £17880 against outgoings excluding staff cost of £7280 which evidences further reductions in costs from the last two years due to prudent management. However, this is likely to increase by around 20% in the 2017-2018 financial year as the Council can no longer reclaim VAT on Hub operations due to the business nature of the premises. Staff costs, which include cleaner and Handyman (5 hours per week) including the proposed new Assistant to the Clerk role at 15 hours per week would total around £15k per annum, leaving a shortfall to be funded of around £5k per annum. This can be funded this year by grant funds still to be claimed and sale of tractor (£6k remaining after purchase of cooker) and/or parish council budgeted reserve funds of £10,000 could be used if absolutely necessary. If the Council had to fund all or part of this staff cost in future years the effect on the precept would be £1.73 per annum per Band D household per additional £1000 of cost **RESOLVED:** that the Assistant to the Clerk to the Council should be advertised at 15 hours per week with a starting date of 1st August 2017 – funding to come from the Community Hub income and balances in the first instance. The Clerk will undertake a full review of Hub budgets ready for June meeting to confirm the position. This will be a one year Fixed Term Contract and full review of costs which may necessitate increases for Hub users and/or parish council support in the form of increased precept will be reviewed for 2018/2019 budgets. The existing short term fixed contract which is due to finish on 30th June 2017 will be extended for one month to 31st July 2017 to enable a smooth handover to the successful applicant.

Handyman Contract The existing Handyman has a fixed term contract to the end of January 2018 at 5 hours per week. His time is fully utilised but the appointment is saving substantial resources as it is no longer necessary to obtain quotes for various smaller jobs needed and costs are maintained at a lower level as labour costs are already incorporated in salary and any work needed requires materials only. The Clerk will provide more details of the overall savings taking into account works completed by the Handyman with year-end figures. The Clerk advised that there is plenty of work to do on a weekly basis and ‘the jobs list’ is increasing weekly and that potentially further ‘over-all’ savings could be obtained by additional handyman hours being used to trim hedges, weeding etc. rather than putting this out to contract. It was **RESOLVED:** to advertise a new Handyman

position of 5 hours per week and to see what response we get as traditionally we have not received applications for these posts and then review the position once we have applications to look at - this would involve a potential cost to the PC/ Community Hub of a further £3k per annum – this could only be funded by depleting the planned reserves of £10k for this year, although a VAT refund due for 2016/2017 of £1200 could help the position. It may be more feasible to manage this on existing hours with overtime as and when needed at least for this financial year.

Clerks hours It was noted that the Clerk’s workload and hours will need reviewing in the light of additional responsibilities imposed re managing staff and overall management of the Hub as this has never been reviewed properly and will also be dependent upon the outcome of proposals re managing the Village Hall. It is hoped that further details may be available on this matter at June meeting for consideration.

It was **RESOLVED:** that these minutes may be released to the public and do not need to remain confidential as these do not include information specific to individuals.

Signed.....Date.....

APPENDIX ‘A’ BOXTED PARISH COUNCIL

Current Account

Payment Method	Payee	Gross £	VAT£	Net £	Description
Standing Order	Mrs D Humphris	893.23		893.23	Salary
standing Order	Essex Pension	273.23		273.23	Pension
Standing Order	Essex Pension	273.23		273.23	Pension
OP8-17	Inland Revenue	392.58		392.58	y.e paye
OP9-17	Inland Revenue	930.44		930.44	Apr and May PAYE
OP10-17	D Marvan	600	100	500	Grasscutting
OP11-17	D Marvan	144	24	120	Gates
OP12-17	ealc	359.51		359.51	Annual subs
OP13-17	Playdale	1587.6	264.6	1323	New gates

Community Hub

Payment Method	Payee	Gross £	VAT£	Net £	Description
Standing Order	Mrs E McKay	230.31		230.31	Salary
Standing Order	Mr B	263.79		263.79	Salary

	Took				
Standing Order	Mrs N Smith	317.27		317.27	Salary May
OPCH3-17	rcce	60	10	50	Salary (April)
OPCH4-17	Future Electrical	174	29	145	Electrical work
OPCH5-17	Pestforce	70		70	Pest Control
OPCH56-17	Mrs N Smith	35.91		35.91	Keys

CHAIRMAN SIGNATURE

DATE

DRAFT