

DRAFT

Minutes of

Dedham Parish Council

www.dedhamparishcouncil.co.uk



Minutes of the meeting of Dedham Parish Council held on
Monday 6th December 2023 at 6:30pm
at the Duchy Barn.

This meeting is being recorded for training purposes.

Attendees: Cllr Smith, Cllr Harrison, Cllr Beeton, Cllr Williams, Cllr Bourn, Cllr Thorkildsen

Present: Clerk Carol Harbach
7 Members of the public
Cllr Tom Rowe Colchester City Councillor (CCC)

23/129 Welcome by the Chairman and apologies for absence received.
Cllr Smith welcomed everyone to the meeting. Apologies were received from Cllr Neville and Cllr Mole.

23/130 Declaration of Interests.
Councillors to declare any disclosable pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests relevant to this agenda. Note; Interests may also be declared at any point in the meeting where they become apparent. Cllr Smith reminded and clarified the difference of pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests to councillors.
None arose.

23/131 Minutes
Acceptance of the minutes of the meetings of 6th November 2023.
These had been circulated to all councillors previous to the meeting and were agreed to be true and accurate account of events.
Proposed Cllr Thorkildsen seconded Cllr Bourn. All agreed.

23/132 Matters arising from last minutes
New Bin for Princl Lane is on order.
Call out of planning applications by Cllr Rowe at CCC will be covered under the planning section.
Other items are on the agenda.

23/133 Have Your Say and visitors reports (Colchester City Councillor (CCC) and County Councillors)
Questions may not be answered at this meeting but may go on to the next agenda.
Maximum of 3 minutes per person/group to make representations to the Parish Council, to a total of 15 minutes.
The question from a member of the public was agreed to leave until the planning section.

There has been a few people in this afternoon who visited the exhibition regarding Royal Square.

Cllr Rowe spoke about his Locality budget which is going to Dedham Vale area to promote dark skies. There was an event recently in Nayland regarding this to make people more aware of the importance of the dark skies campaign.

Cllr Rowe stated that the City Council will be calling for allocation for sites for houses soon and Colchester will be in touch regarding this. Cllr Rowe will write officially to the parish council regarding this. Cllr Beeton has spoken to the planning department regarding this due to where Dedham is allocated and its proximity to AONB and due to this Dedham may not be requested for a large amount. There will be a meeting with the planning officer and the council so they are talking with each other regarding this.

Cllr Rowe stated that the City Council meeting is coming up soon and agenda items are Gaza, anomalies in councils accounts, knife crime and CCTV in taxi cabs.

23/134 Elections for Parish Councillors May 2024

The scheduled election for Dedham Parish Council in 2020 was postponed due to the covid restrictions until 2021. This in turn meant that all councillors elected due to the postponement were elected for a 3-year term, enabling the Parish Council to remain on the same electoral cycle.

It was not made clear to the new Council in 2021 that its first year of office was effectively the second year of office.

23/135 Finance, Standards and Procedures Report

135.1 To approve expenditure for this month.

Village Warden invoice for Nov 23	794.50
Clerk Salary up to 8 th Dec 23 including backpay	774.02
HMRC Tax and NI	209.74
DPCC Barn hire invoice 94	140.00
Moser Groundcare – field cutting Inv 1530	1,740.00
CCC – car park cashless and permit processing fee 1 st Qtr and 2 nd Qtr up to 30/9/23	2,856.37
Toni Spurgin- Christmas Wreaths for business'	500.00
Offices Ltd – paper for council	44.40
Information Commissioners Office – Data Protection fee	40.00
Dedham Sports Club S106 UU money received from CCC	2,544.16
Springold Ltd-printing for Royal Square displays	240.00
EALC – councillor training for Cllr Bourn	228.00
	=====
Total	£ 10,111.19

Balance as at 30/11/23

A/C 90343633	£1,000.00
A/C 90365149	£300,945.59
	=====
	£301,945.59

Income	£45,691.83
Expenditure	£47,760.44

This expenditure was proposed by Cllr Harrison seconded by Cllr Smith.
All agreed.

135.2 To approve the proposed budget and precept for 2024/2025

These documents had been circulated to councillors prior to the meeting. Cllr Harrison explained the budget and precept figures in detail and answered any questions that arose. The figures for these documents were read out and explained and how budget figures were used to produce the precept. The current budget was also explained and the reasons for the balance of last year's budget is that the Capital Projects had not yet started. Cllr Harrison has produced a short report explaining these documents which will be circulated to councillor shortly and also be placed on the website. These documents were proposed Cllr Harrison seconded Cllr Smith. All agreed.

135.3 To approve possible election costs for May 2024 of up to £1600.

This had been discussed earlier – 23/134 - and the costs if an election was called would be £1600, if there is not election called the costs will be £70. These figures are within the budget.
Proposed Cllr Harrison seconded Cllr Thorkildsen All agreed.

135.6 To approve grant request of £1200 for Dedham Christmas Lunch for Older residents.

This is an annual event run for the residents of Dedham. They have held this annually for several years at it is well attended. The organisers are requesting a donation of £1200 towards the costs of putting this event on and they make up the difference from other fund-raising events through the year. This year it is the 6th January. Miles Wilson has a list of everyone who is over 65 and invitations go out in the post. The council discussed this and think it is a good idea it was agreed it needs to be advertised more to let residents know about the Dedham Community Meal. This will be conveyed to Miles Wilson as a condition for next year should it arise. It was thought that the maximum for this is 140 people.
Proposed Cllr Thorkildsen second Cllr Harrison All agreed.
This will be added to the expenditure list for this month.

23/136

Infrastructure and Asset management

136.1 Jubilee tree guards and memorial plaques update

Cllr Thorkildsen updated the council by stating that he had been in touch with the blacksmith and has asked him a few times for costs but has not heard back. Cllr Thorkildsen will follow this up one last time and report back at next meeting. Another supplier will be considered and contacted by Cllr Thorkildsen as well.

136.2 Blue plaque update

Cllr Beeton updated the council by stating that this is still underway and the plans now being drawn up and then the plans will be submitted to the planning department.

136.3 Approval of proposed new community benches

Cllr Bourn put this proposal forward for new community benches for consideration. This was discussed by the group previously and Cllr Bourn gave some more details on this to the council. This will be investigated into further by Cllr Bourn and details will be brought back to the next council meeting. It was suggested that there could be more benches around the playground area and other parts of the village e.g. Lamb corner, Bygate Lane etc the benches being looked at are from The Friendly Bench company. Action Cllr Bourn.

136.4 Recommend re appointment of contractors for 2024

Footpaths - 30p a metre which costs approximates £7,600 annually

Grass cutting – currently £7,600 per annum for 20 cuts

This was put forward by Cllr Mole to continue with the contractors that we have used this year – Moser Groundcare Ltd for the field and FFC Freeman & Son Ltd for the footpath cutting. The council were pleased with the work they had undertaken and the award that had been won for the playing field, the prices quoted had been looked at by the group.

The group proposed to continue this year with these contractors.

Subject to the final figures being shown to the council, this was proposed in principle by the council. Proposed Cllr Harrison seconded Cllr Beeton All agreed.

23/137

Planning/planning applications

137.1 Proposed agreement for the Planning Group new terms of reference – previously circulated to councillors

This has previously been distributed to councillors and was explained by Cllr Beeton in more detail.

Proposed Cllr Beeton seconded Cllr Bourn. All agreed.

137.2 Consider and approve proposed recommendation from Colchester City Council (CCC) to designate Dedham as a “Rural Parish”

This is concerning local plans and call for sites by CCC the closing dates for this is Friday 5th January 2024. Some other parishes have more land available than Dedham and if there is a particular need this may be able to be met by the council.

Affordable housing is the main concern which has been widely publicised in this area. There are normally more sites that come forward for housing than are needed.

There are proposals for planning regulations by the City Council to be relaxed. Affordable housing was discussed and any development put forward will have a section on this. It has been reported that there is a willingness to have Dedham as a Rural Parish which differs Rural and Urban parishes. The Rural

parish building density would be less than an urban area design and the designation of this will reduce the amount required. This gives a little bit of protection for the future but not all of Dedham are in the rural parish criteria. It was proposed that Dedham council support this to have Dedham allocated as a Rural Area.

Proposed Cllr Beeton seconded Cllr Williams. All agreed.

137.3 Groups recommendations on Planning applications from CCC

232174 - Petalo Lodge, Boxhouse Lane, Dedham Essex CO7 6HZ

Changes to previously submitted planning applications.

This was "called" by the council by Cllr Rowe on the parish councils' behalf. This latest application came in for a garage and the rest of the development of this site still needs to be looked at. This was called by Cllr Rowe and now there is another application in for a change in the application. Previously the application was for a temporary building with garage and 2 bays and 2 windows. The council did not agree with the new proposal. The recent application now has a smaller application submitted and the top level has been removed. The council do not want to change it's original comment to this. It currently has 3 objections at the moment, including 1 from 1 AONB. All comments show this as overbearing and the Council will keep to the original comments and objections.

Nicola Perry has been contacted and Cllr Rowe reported that the officers have said they broadly agree with concerns raised when this was put forward and called in and they are not going to treat this as an individual application but will now be looking at the whole site. The reason for this is that the owner keeps making amendments and these need to be collected. This needs to be followed carefully and the information gathered properly so the right decision is made. The head of planning has been contacted for a date but this has not come back as yet but hopefully he will report shortly. The planning and enforcement officers are working behind the scenes and looking at this application.

Anything that has been approved previously is likely to remain and any new application will be considered alongside these, the actual planning that has been approved will be looked at to see that it has been built as approved. It will be checked to see what has not been followed and what has been implemented and how it has been built/not built. There has been a requested by Cllr Rowe for a site visit to check what has already been built and check if it has not been to the planning agreement. All of these will be scrutinised including from the original domestic planning to the now commercial use. The comments will be sent back to CCC tomorrow by the parish council regarding this application.

Cllr Rowe was thanked for all his work on this, there has been slow progress being made but it is being followed up.

232496 - 20 Dedham Meade, Dedham Colchester CO7 6EU S6AD

Proposed Garden Office

This was discussed and not impacting on neighbours and there is no objection and agreed to support this application.

T1 large conifer with large section fallen away from trunk on to neighbouring barn roof (now cleared) Remaining trunk now has large split to base. Section fell for safety reasons. T2 Large conifer close neighbour of above tree split branches in main canopy. No comment from council.

Late application that came in to day – 232725 - Little Orchard, Bargate Lane, Dedham Essex CO7 6BN Proposed side extension – after the agenda was published. This will be circulated and if there is an issue it will be left until next year.

Cllr Mole will be the councillor allocated to the Green project within this group.

23/138

Highways

138.1 Proposed agreement for School Poster Competition for £500 in prizes

This had been discussed at the last DPC meeting and was Proposed by Cllr Harrison seconded by Cllr Thorkildsen All Agreed. Action Cllr Neville.

23/139

Pylons update

Cllr Mole has previously reported at the planning meeting and the notes are below;

Cllr. Mole reported on the findings of a recently commissioned independent review by ECC of National Grid's highly controversial plan for 110 miles of 50-metre high pylons across East Anglia. The report concludes:

It is too early to conclude that Norwich to Tilbury represents the best solution

NG workings and assumptions are not transparent. Limited sensitivities have been tested. It does not appear that most up to date methodology has been used
It is likely that the need justification for the project has been overstated. The earliest need for the reinforcement of the grid in Essex, Suffolk and Norfolk is 2035 not 2030
Landing points for interconnectors could be moved further south to Bradwell or Tilbury

In addition to this:

- As part of their plans in East Anglia, National Grid intends to build an offshore cable known as Sea Link directly between Suffolk and Kent, bypassing Essex. As planned, this is in addition to the Norwich to Tilbury pylons
- As explained previously, the Sealink Cable is intended to run near the Five Estuaries and North Falls Wind Farms but NOT to connect to them.
- If Sealink did connect to those two wind farms then it could remove the need for the windfarms to make landfall in Tendring, remove the need for the multiple substations here, and remove the need for cables beneath the AONB and pylons along the southern edge through North Colchester.

In addition, it has been announced in the Autumn Statement that a £10,000 grant over ten years will be made available to 'eligible' applicants in close proximity to pylons

Cllr Rowe reported that this report was discussed between Essex, Suffolk and Norwich councils and the bullet report look good, but the details are not exactly what was asked for. ECC have been asked why offshore grid is not mentioned and what is the plan regarding this. Both options need to be looked at and discussed properly by the councils, and there is more to this report than meets the eye and are asking Colchester to look into this more. The report is not written as expected and have requested a proper report to discuss this in more detail. The report states that the costs are hard to finalise, but this is not true as these are working further up north so there has some rough ideas of costs involved. Cllr Rowe is still pushing for offshore grid option but is still sceptical for this. James Ryan- joint head of planning, is following this up and wants to talk to residents and councils about where the pylons are going and the areas of significance including views and the areas related to this. He is gaining local knowledge in the area. Cllr Bourn is also currently working on different sustainability issues related to this.

23/140

Group 3 Community relations group

140.1 Royal Square update– proposed agreement of up to £1200 for an independent analysis of surveys of Royal Square

There currently has been 89 surveys received and the boxes are still available until the end of December. This proposal will be the analysis of the questions and the comments as well. This was discussed by the council and residents present. This proposal is for these surveys to be independently analysed by a consultant and a report to come back to the council once the deadline has finished. Current budget quote is £800. An allowance of £400 will be made as time related.

Proposed Cllr Smith seconded Cllr Beeton 2 councillors abstained.

The surveys still need to be taken to the businesses for them to have their opinion known. These will be distributed by Cllr Williams.

140.2 Update of River

Not much at moment to report.

140.3 Sports Club Update S106 money

The S106 money has been received from CCC Parks and Leisure for £2,544.16 and as agreed previously by the council, this is to go to Dedham Sports Club to help with their continued refurbishment. There is also another claim going through from the Community S106 team for £1440. At the moment this application is currently at appeal so this has been put on hold, but will hopefully go through as well and this can then also be passed on to the Sports Club.

140.4 Sustainability update

Cllr Bourn updated the council on his work on sustainability with his group. Three group meetings have taken place and have been looking at ways and initiatives around the village from sustainability point of view. They have

looked at traffic particularly. There is on-going monitoring of the water quality of the water at the river and the outcomes of these need to be more available by the public. The chair of the group is on Manningtree sustainability group and he has good contacts on this and will follow this up, this will be reported back when known.

There are well-being initiatives and groups around the village which are available and there is a need to make people aware of what is available. There were also eco church award discussions that took place and the extending activities to rewilding some of the areas of the churchyard. A public meeting in the spring with other environmental groups around the area will be organised soon.

140.5 Sustainability leaflet – proposed agreement of £437 + VAT

This had previously been introduced by Cllr Bourn at the last meeting and the costs for this are proposed as above. This would be for Dedham and show how to reduce carbon. This request is for the printing only but the art work on these still needs to be decided. There may be another small quote for £100 in the future for this. The wording will be looked at and distributed to the councillors before anything is agreed. This would be sent out in the parish magazine for residents and put on the website.

Proposed Cllr Harrison second Cllr Williams to take this forward. All agreed.

140.6 Proposal for DPC Facebook page creation and 12 weeks management cost £500. Quote for works previously circulated to councillors.

This proposal had previously been circulated to councillors and was discussed at the last meeting. Cllr Bourn reported back that from his recent training it was thought best to look at the issues raised and one channel of communication to come back from the council. This should be one-way conversation, usually the clerk, and other members do not get drawn into the conversations. The clerk should be the main responder and not the councillors. Clerk to send out the social media draft policy again to be looked by councillors via email. This can be monitored by one person and the communications should be sent by the Clerk. This proposal would be on a trial basis only go forward cautiously. This was then discussed further and proposed by Cllr Harrison seconded Cllr Thorkildsen. All agreed.

23/141

Resignation of Clerk

This will be the last meeting of the present Clerk as Mrs Harbach has resigned Cllr Smith thanked for the work she had undertaken in the past for the council and Mrs Harbach had arrived at a difficult time when the previous Clerk had resigned and the Council were without a Clerk for 6 months. The Clerk position will be filled by a temporary Clerk - Mr Grahame Walkingshaw.

The personnel committee will look to make a permanent appointment as soon as possible.

The rest of the council thanked Mrs Harbach for her work.

23/142

Proposed request to increase in contribution of £500 to Parish Magazine

There has been a request from the Parish Magazine to increase the contributions that the council makes to them by £500 to a total of £1500 annually.

This was discussed by the council and the increase was thought to be brought forward due to increases in costs by the magazine.
Proposed Cllr Thorkildsen seconded Cllr Harrison All agreed.

23/143

Christmas Market and wreaths update

This had been very popular and the wreaths had arrived in time to be put up before the event. Cllr Thorkildsen updated the council on the event and stated that it had been very successful and the school had raised a good amount of money. There will be a thank you letter from the Parish Council to the school regarding this market. At the moment the amount was just over £4000 raised for the school. Thanks, were given to Cllr Thorkildsen for his help with the school and the event.

It was brought up by a councillor that a couple who live in the village Mr and Mrs Oakley have been helping in the village for many years, sweeping up leaves and keeping the area around the Royal Square tidy on behalf of the Church. They are now retiring and a formal letter from the council of thanks and a donation of £100 garden voucher will be sent.

Proposed Cllr Beeton seconded Thorkildsen All agreed

This will be put in the parish magazine. Possibility of a community award in the village was discussed for the future.

23/144

Business Breakfast March - costs update

These had been looked into by Cllr Williams and a proposed costs for the Business Breakfast to be held at the Malborough will be put forward for agreement on the next agenda. This will be published in the February parish magazine. Information needs to be with the editors by 10th January 2024.

23/145

Clerks Correspondence and contact enquiry forms

There has been correspondence from a resident requesting that the yellow lines be reinstated in the High Street as they are very faint. This has been forwarded on to the appropriate group.

There was also a request as to the public toilet's being shut on the playing field, the resident was replied to stating that this is under CCC control and suggested to contact them for an update.

Essex Playing Fields Association have won award and a trophy for the best playing field in group. Andy Bell has agreed to display these at the sports centre.

The grounds contractors will be contacted to inform them of this and thanked for their work.

23/146

Training events

Reports on attended events

Cllr Bourn has attended part one of councillor training as is still to attend the second part.

Nominations for new events

Any requirements to be sent to the Clerk

23/147

Items for next agenda

See above and any other items to be sent to the Clerk

23/148

Time and date of next meeting

Next meeting Monday 8th January 2024 6:30pm Duchy barn

23/149

Chairmans closure of meeting

Chairman closed the meeting at 8:40pm