

EIGHT ASH GREEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held at the Eight Ash Green Village Hall, Spring Lane, Eight Ash Green on Wednesday 12 October 2022 at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr Alan Bilby
Cllr Lorraine Christie
Cllr John Jardine (Chairman)
Cllr Dean Nokes
Cllr Stephen Smith
Cllr Tina Morgan
Cllr Christine Willetts

Ward Councillor Dennis Willetts also attended.

There were ten members of the public in attendance.

51-22/23 To receive Apologies for Absence and confirm acceptance of those apologies

There were no apologies to receive.

52-22/23 Declaration of Interests

There were no Declarations of Interest.

53-22/23 Public Participation

Mr John Allcock referred to the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan and asked the Parish Council's view on the development with reference to the Plan. He said the development so far seemed to be in line with the requirements of the Plan.

He asked about the road junction from the development with Halstead Road.

The Chairman said the T-junction was a priority junction. He said for the moment the developers were continuing with this while looking at options including signage. He said once the road was open, the Parish Council could contact local companies using the road to advise on the preferred HGV route.

Mr Allcock asked about the provision of bus stops.

Signed _____
Cllr J. Jardine, Chairman

The Chairman said the Parish Council were still pushing CBC on this issue. He said Essex County Councillor Lewis Barber was pursuing the provision of two stops.

The Chairman said complaints regarding noise seemed to have settled down.

A resident referred to the Village Hall and said he had cleared a tree as requested but that there was still a problem with a fence on the hall boundary.

Cllr Bilby said the Village Hall Committee would replace the fence.

Cllr Nokes said that this issue was between the resident and the Village Hall committee.

Mr Tim Chambers said that the Cricket Club had enjoyed a good season. He said the Club had been awarded a Tackling Climate Change award which had been presented by Graham Gooch. He said the groundsman had reported an increase in dog fouling from September which seemed to be a common problem each year.

54-22/23 To agree as a true record the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 13 July 2022

The minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on Wednesday 13 July 2022 were **agreed** as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

55-22/23 Report from the County and Borough Councillors: Report from County Councillor and Ward Councillors, if present.

Cllr Christine Willetts said that Cllr Dennis Willetts was attending a meeting at the Borough Council but hoped to arrive shortly.

56-22/23 To review the Council's Action Tracker and to note any action necessary.

The Council's Action Tracker was reviewed. Cllr Jardine said an updated Tracker would be circulated by the Clerk following the meeting.

a) Dog fouling

Cllr Morgan said she had noticed the problem had increased recently. She said there was a Public Space Protection Order in place across the borough but no measures taken so far seemed to work. It was noted a further appeal would be put on Facebook.

Signed _____
Cllr J. Jardine, Chairman

b) The closure of the Highways Devolution Scheme and ways to address this

It was noted that the scheme appeared to be finished.

c) Project list for S106 funds.

Cllr Nokes said new litter bins for the Play Area should be added to this list.

d) Update on Village Hall project

Cllr Bilby said following discussion with CBC Planning Officers the Hall Committee would be submitting amended drawings with changed elevations.

57-22/23 To agree the Parish Council response to planning applications received from Colchester Borough Council and to note decisions made on previous applications

221870 - Eight Ash Green Village Hall, Village Hall, 25 Spring Lane, Eight Ash Green Essex CO6 3QF - Demolition of existing hall (202m²) and replacing with new hall 272m². New hall to be positioned further back on the existing site making better use of redundant land to the sides and rear to increase off street parking

It was **agreed** that there was no objection to this application, with nothing included contrary to the Village Design Statement. It was noted that amended drawings were to be submitted.

221871 - Eight Ash Court, Halstead Road, Eight Ash Green Colchester CO6 3QJ - Conversion of 2no. 6 bedroom care home bungalows into 8 self-contained units providing supported living services for people with learning disabilities

It was **agreed** there was no objection to this application, with nothing included that was contrary to the VDS or the Eight Ash Green Neighbourhood Plan. Concern was noted regarding the floor plan and lack of accommodation for carers and the potential for parking issues given the number of units involved.

222097 – Little Maltings, Little Maltings Farm, Abbots Lane, Eight Ash Green, CO6 3QL – Construction of a new single storey office building

Signed _____
Cllr J. Jardine, Chairman

It was **agreed** that there was no objection to the provision of an office on this site. It was also noted that the site was outside the village envelope and that CBC should consider that residential use for the building should not be granted at any point in the future and that the office should only be sold as part of the main building.

222284 – Land at Eight Ash Green Dental Surgery, Halstead Road, Eight Ash Green, CO6 3QA – Outline application with some matters reserved – erection of a residential development comprising 9 units with associated parking and relocation of parking facilities for the retained dental practice

It was **agreed** to comment as follows:

“Eight Ash Green’s Neighbourhood Plan was recently adopted by CBC. There was a “call for sites” to landowners within the village, who wished to apply to develop their land for residential use. The site which is the subject of this planning application was not submitted, and therefore not considered by the village residents.

This site has just over 1/3 of its area within the settlement boundary, and the balance lies outside it. Therefore any development outside the boundary would be contrary to our NP.

The area for future housing in the village was decided by our residents through multiple consultations, who specified there should only be one strategic site for residential development within the village to meet CBC’s housing needs of 150 dwellings. This is the Fiddlers Field /Aspen Walk development.

The properties within our new housing development contain a complete mix of housing for local needs as specified by our village. There is no need for additional ad hoc development.

The villagers stressed that piecemeal building throughout the village should not be permitted, and strong opinions were expressed that the settlement boundary should not be extended any further as 150 extra dwellings already increased the size of the village by about 20%. All of these comments were incorporated into our approved NP.

The site which is the subject of this application is situated adjacent to a large open field which is also outside the village settlement boundary but which was however submitted under the “call for sites” strategy. This site was completely rejected by the village who wished to retain the open airy aspect

Signed _____
Cllr J. Jardine, Chairman

within the village centre, and this request was duly incorporated into the NP. Development encroaching towards this open area would be contrary to that wish. Approval of the above application would be regarded by the village that the settlement boundary could easily be extended against their wishes, and this planning application was just the starting point.

Approval of any application to develop a site outside the village settlement boundary would be an open invitation for any developers to follow suit which would be completely contrary to our NP.

The settlement boundary exists to protect the village from such piecemeal development, and no breach should be allowed which would create a dangerous precedent and give rise to ribbon development or urban sprawl, both of which are also contrary to our NP.

The NP specified that all new housing within the village should be low-medium density to be compatible with the open aspects of the surroundings and the character of the village. The outline drawings on this application show several properties squashed onto the site giving a very cramped appearance in an area immediately adjacent to the previously mentioned large open field. This over development is totally out of character with the surrounding rural area and so also contrary to our NP.

There is a bus shelter to the immediate west of the site of this planning application so sightlines are limited, and a pedestrian crossing a few metres towards the east. Spring Lane to the east and Blind Lane almost opposite form a "crossroads" on a tight bend in the road with very limited visual display from all directions. Up to 18 vehicles egressing the site in the morning rush hour will create severe concerns for everyone's safety.

Planning Decisions

221568 - 21 The Walk, Eight Ash Green Essex CO6 3QG - Dormer window to front bedroom – *Permission granted, 3 conditions, 26th August 2022*

58-22/23 Heaths and Greens

a) To receive a report on Heaths and Greens

Mr Winterbourne referred to the Tree Survey which had recently been received. He said 22 trees had been earmarked as needing attention with medium to low risk. He said he was in the process of seeking quotes for the necessary work.

Signed _____
Cllr J. Jardine, Chairman

He said he and Cllr Nokes would be meeting the Council's contractor to discuss potential work at Abbotts Pond. He said it would be a shame to lose this pond and he would report back in due course.

He said the next Volunteer Day would take place on Saturday 22 October 2022.

- b) To discuss upkeep of the Play Area and note any action necessary**
i) To consider and possibly agree to expenditure of £295 for repairs to the Play Area recommended by the annual Playquip report

Expenditure of £295 for repairs to the Play Area as recommended by the annual Playquip report was **agreed**.

- c) To consider and possibly agree to allow the Cricket Club to hold a social event in September which is not connected to a cricket event**

It was **agreed** to allow the Cricket Club to hold a social event in September which was not connected to a cricket event.

- d) To receive an update on any outstanding issues affecting Parish Council land.**

Cllr Nokes advised there was a walnut tree on the allotment site which would have to be removed and he would advise further in due course.

Cllr Willetts raised the issue of parking along the verge on Seven Star Green.

Cllr Dennis Willetts said the Borough Council was the enforcer of byelaws on common land. He said he felt a meeting between the Parish Council and the Borough Council would be useful to discuss the implementation of a management scheme of byelaw enforcement.

The Clerk said she would contact Andrew Weavers regarding this in the first instance.

59-22/23 Allotments

- a) To note the appointment of two Allotment Stewards**

The appointment of two Allotment Stewards was noted.

Signed _____
 Cllr J. Jardine, Chairman

b) To record the Parish Council's thanks to the outgoing Allotment Steward

The Parish Council's thanks to the outgoing Allotment Steward was recorded.

60-22/23 Streetlighting**a) To review the report supplied by A & J Lighting**

The report supplied by A & J Lighting was reviewed.

b) To consider and possibly agree to repair work detailed in the report

It was **agreed** to undertake the repair work detailed in the report.

61-22/23 To consider and possibly agree to accept the quotation of £251.10 plus VAT for six reflective signpost plates.

It was **agreed** to accept the quotation of £251.10 plus VAT for six reflective signpost plates.

62-22/23 To consider and possibly agree expenditure for provision of refreshments for the 2022 lighting of the Christmas Tree

It was noted that the lighting of the Tree would take place on Thursday 8 December 2022 at 6pm. It was **agreed** to purchase refreshments for the event.

63-22/23 Accounts & Payments:

- a) Statement of Accounts to be circulated prior to the meeting
- b) Approve cheques for signature in accordance with 2022/23 Budget (Invoices Sheet) – to be circulated at the meeting.

Cheques were approved for signature as follows:

Cllr D Nokes	Digital printing	£29.94
A & J Lighting	Streetlight Repairs	£514.80
EAG Village Hall	Hall hire	£210.00
Various	Staff costs	£684.40
Tree & Lawn Co.	Footpath clearance	£720.00
PKF Littlejohn LLP	External audit fee	£240.00

Signed _____
Cllr J. Jardine, Chairman

64-22/23 To consider and possibly agree to pay for the STATs work for the Vehicle Activated Signs at a cost of £621.60 including VAT (details circulated prior to the meeting)

It was **agreed** to pay for the STATs work for the Vehicle Activated Signs at a cost of £621.60 including VAT (details circulated prior to the meeting).

65-22/23 To receive reports from Councillors including feedback from meetings attended

Cllr Dennis Willetts said he was looking for articles for the next issue of the newsletter.

He said he had received complaints about how the problems with agricultural vehicles in the parish over the summer had been reported in the last issue. He said three points had been raised and he would offer an apology on all three.

Cllr Nokes said he and Cllr Smith had attended the latest CALC meeting. He said there had been an interesting speaker from the police who had given information on the structure of methods across the borough. He said this speaker could be invited to come to a Parish Council meeting.

He said the meeting had also addressed trying to set up a bus user group across the borough.

He said the working of the Local Highways Panel was to be reviewed.

Cllr Bilby said he had heard nothing further about a meeting to address HGV issues across the parish.

Cllr Jardine referred to the email received from Cllr Barber about the provision of a path across the heath. He said he felt the priority should be provision around rather than across the heath.

He said the roads around Tollgate were now shambolic. It was suggested that Essex County Councillor Lee Scott could be invited to a site meeting to discuss the issues.

66-22/23 Date of Next Planned Meeting: Wednesday 9 November 2022 at 7.30pm at the Eight Ash Green Village Hall, Spring Lane, Colchester.

Signed _____
Cllr J. Jardine, Chairman