

BRIGHTLINGSEA TOWN COUNCIL

Minutes of the Council Meeting held at
The Parish Hall, Victoria Place, Brightlingsea,
on: Thursday 20th June 2024 at 7.00pm.

Present:

Councillors

J Carr (Mayor)

M Court (Deputy Mayor)

D Atkinson, M Barry, J Chapman, J Howard,
M Judson, K Mitchell, C Paveley, K Pentney,
R Morgan and G Steady

In attendance:

Tracey Pulford – Town Clerk

9 Members of the public

County Councillor Goggin and Jordan Knight

Councillor Carr informed members that one item on the agenda had moved to earlier on in the meeting, this being County Councillor Goggin. He asked for questions to be kept brief, as he is then off to St Osyth for their monthly meeting.

22. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: None received.

23. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL MEETING HELD ON THE 16TH MAY 2024 AND TO CONFIRM AS A CORRECT RECORD:

Councillor Chapman proposed that the Minutes of the meeting held on the 16th May 2024 were accepted as a true record. Seconded by Councillor Howard. **Agreed.**

24. MAYORS ANNOUNCEMENTS:

A copy of the Mayor's Announcements are annexed to the Minutes (see attached appendix 1).

Councillor Carr gave thanks to Councillor Chapman for her help with organising the wreath for the 80th Anniversary of D-Day.

25. DECLARATION OF DISCLOSABLE PECUNIARY INTERESTS:

The Mayor reminded Members to declare interests when necessary.

26. UPDATE FROM COUNTY COUNCILLOR GOGGIN:

A copy of County Councillor Goggin's notes had been circulated to all members.

County Councillor Goggin reported on the following:-

- A copy of May's notes are being re-presented, as they were not received at the May Meeting. Any questions, please ask.
- Councillor Howard asked about the Seals. County Councillor Goggin mentioned the Kent and Essex Fisheries, who are making sure the fish stocks are good. He said it is lovely to see the seal colonies, however they are destroying the fish colonies.
- School place allocations are taking place at the moment. 97% get their first or second choice, and 3% do not.

- There is an awful situation with children with special needs. There is an increase of 76% with parents applying for SEN certificates.
- Councillor Pentney asked to be involved with the proposed Zebra Crossing on Lower Park Road. Councillor Morgan suggested that this item is brought up at the next Environmental and Transport meeting.
- Councillor Paveley mentioned the school allocations, and what happens regarding transportation if you do not get the school requested. County Councillor Goggin replied that some sort of transport will be provided.

Members of the public then asked the following questions:

- I assume Essex County Council are responsible for footpaths, when are they to be cleared as they are in an overgrown state? County Councillor Goggin replied that Essex County Council is responsible for many of the pathways and alleyways. They are responsible for upward growth but are not responsible for sideward growth. He said that the work is scheduled to be carried out. A discussion took place. Councillor Carr added that footpaths and alleyways are to be discussed at the next meeting of the Environment and Transport meeting in July.

County Councillor Goggin then left the meeting at 7.15pm, to go to the St Osyth monthly Council meeting.

27. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE RECOMMENDATIONS OF THOSE MEMBERS EXAMINING THE ACCOUNTS FOR THE CURRENT PERIOD:

Councillor Howard informed members that it has not been possible to provide the end of April and May 2024 statements – these will be provided at the next meeting. She therefore proposed 17 payments totalling £17,712.66 (as attached appendix 2) be authorised for payment and statement of balances on the following accounts be accepted:-

Barclays Current Account (XXXX7055)	9,575.27
Barclays Deposit Account (XXXX8295)	66,147.92
Barclays Client Account (XXXX9433)	5,099.97
Unity Deposit Account (XXXX0373)	81,925.82
Unity Current Account (XXXX0360)	3,477.69
Making a total of	£166,226.67
Employee payments paid for the month of May 2024 were:	17,136.13

Seconded by Councillor Chapman. **Agreed.**

28. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE FINANCE MEETING HELD ON 18TH JUNE 2024 AND TO CONFIRM THE RECOMMENDATIONS THEREIN:

Councillor Atkinson proposed that the Minutes of the Finance and Property Meeting held on the 18th June 2024 are accepted as a true record, and the recommendations (as written below) be accepted:

- Install Smart Meters on all Council Property.**
- Trading Division – establish a working group to review pricing and margins.**
- Install a point of sale till, with card reader.**
- Review all policies, including risk assessment and asset register, within six months.**

- (e) Have an item at every meeting listing any potential write-offs and disputed claims.
- (f) The end of year accounts are prepared earlier in the year and signed off at the May Annual Meeting.
- (g) The Terms of Reference are amended to include:
 - Item 5b – to add ‘where necessary’
 - The end of year accounts are prepared earlier in the year and signed off at the May Annual Meeting.
- (h) The Asset Register figure of £2,704,579 is to be included on the AGAR – Section 2, box 9.
- (i) The Internal Audit Report 2023/2024 from Heelis & Lodge is received and the following recommendations were noted:- (1) To review the level of general reserves alongside the Reserves Policy; (2) There are limited policies available on the council’s website. It is recommended that the website is updated.
- (j) Lido – It was noted, with thanks, that there are no outstanding claims on the BTC past funding support.
- (k) The Year End Accounts are agreed and are to be signed off at the Council Meeting on 20th June 2024.
- (l) Section 1 of the Annual Governance Statement is completed as follows: - questions 1-8 yes; question 9 N/A.
- (m) Section 2 – Accounting Statements 2023/2024 - The figures for boxes 1-10 are agreed, with box 11a as ‘No’ and 11b as ‘N/A’.
- (n) The additional paperwork to be sent off to the External Auditor were noted. Trevor Brown CPFA is appointed as the Internal Auditor for 2024/2025.
- (o) 27 payments totalling £17,712.66 are approved for payment, with Councillors Chapman and Howard signing off the invoices.
- (p) Recommendation: (1) The Recording of Public Meetings Policy would be adopted at the Full Council meeting on the 20th June 2024. (2) The NALC Model Financial Regulations are being looked at by the Town Clerk and Chairman, for adoption at a future meeting.
- (q) Recommendation: Standing Annual Grants - write to all who claim a Standing Annual Grant, stating that the Town Council is carrying out a review of its grants, and ask what the money is spent on, and what would happen if they did not receive this grant. Tendring Families First - acknowledge receipt of the request, however due to the current financial situation, there are no monies available at the moment.

Seconded by Councillor Judson.

Councillor Steady congratulated the Finance Committee and mentioned the deficit of £12,000 when in October last year it was proposed at £63,000. He asked if this could be explained? Councillor Atkinson replied that in June the budgets were revised, and we are pleased to report that the deficit dropped to £12,000. This year we are hoping for a surplus situation.

The minutes were then **agreed** by all present.

29. TO RECEIVE THE MINUTES OF THE PLANNING MEETING HELD ON 14TH AND 28TH MAY 2024 AND TO NOTE PLANNING DECISIONS OF TENDRING DISTRICT COUNCIL:

Councillor Paveley proposed that the recommendations in the Minutes of 14th and 28th May 2024 be agreed by Council, together with the planning decisions from Tendring District Council. He then added that the two appeals on Vicarage Meadow had both been turned

down, and if they had been approved it would open up development towards the Church. The Minutes were then seconded by Councillor Howard. **Agreed.**

30. TEAMS REPORTS:

Reports from the Facilities & Community Assets Team, Environment & Transport Team and Welfare & Residents' Services Team had been circulated to all members.

Facilities & Community Assets Team – Councillor Morgan briefed members on the meeting held on the 12th June 2024. After discussion the Facilities & Community Assets Team report was then **accepted**, and the following recommendations **agreed**:-

- **The Terms of Reference are amended to include Membership – up to 8 members, with a quorate being a minimum of 4.**
- **Batemans Tower Café - Send a reminder email to the tenant reminding them of the due date.**
- **Electrical supply on Hurst Green - We await a formal written application from the organisers.**

Environment & Transport Team – Councillor Atkinson briefed members on the meeting held on the 12th June 2024. After discussion the Environment & Transport Assets Team report was **accepted**, and the following recommendations were **agreed**:-

- **Town Clerk to contact SRC to ask the following:- ‘we will be interested to know your Companies intentions and future timescales.’**
- **A copy of a letter from a local resident is forwarded to the relevant authority, Essex County Council, for their consideration.**
- **Essex County Council - (1) The Council looks into the Service Level Agreement with Essex County Council and Grounds Manager – Terry Hamilton – and explore the possibility, with a subcommittee being formed to take this forward. (2) Councillor Atkinson would contact the Grounds Manager and the Music Festival to discuss the possibility of an electrical supply being installed on Hurst Green.**

Welfare & Residents' Services Team – Councillor Chapman informed members that another COVID walk in vaccination clinic is being held on Monday 24th June 2024 between 12noon until 4pm, at the YMCA Hall. This is for people over the age of 75, or over the age of 12, with a suppressed immunisation. Councillor Mitchell asked if this could be displayed on the Council website. **Agreed.**

Communications & Tourism Team – Councillor Paveley informed members that a meeting had been held, where much was discussed, including reviewing the process of how press releases are released. Also, after every meeting the Chairman of that meeting could give the Communications Team a brief update on what was discussed, so this could be released immediately. A notice board in the centre of town was discussed, so public could advertise their events. This would be looked into.

After discussion the Communication & Tourism Team report was **accepted**.

31. UPDATE FROM DISTRICT COUNCILLORS:

Councillor Barry – The consultation on the Sports Strategy has now closed. All responses are being summarised, and an addendum report will go to Cabinet in July or September.

Councillor Chapman – recently met with a local resident about streets that are not being cleaned. This information was sent off to the Officers at Tendring District Council. They are talking about bringing someone down to clean the streets manually, as you cannot get down certain roads due to parking issues. Councillor Chapman also mentioned that the contract that is up for renewal is going out to four companies to tender. Councillor Pentney said that maybe a Community initiative could be introduced, whereby people clean their own areas outside their properties. You could have a ‘best kept road’ competition.

Councillor Steady mentioned the bin emptying, and that some bins appear to be missed. However, if they are half full, the Veolia Contractor does not empty them, which means that in another two to three days, the bins are then overflowing. He said that the Task and Finish Group are going to carry out more scrutiny on the waste contract as well as looking at value for money.

Councillor Howard asked about the bin stickers for Town Council owned bins, and it was noted that prices were needed before this could be progressed any further. Councillor Pentney mentioned the recycling centre at Fiveways, and who the mess should be reported to. The Mayor replied Tendring District Council, but you can also report it via the office. Councillor Chapman added that when the new recycling contract comes into effect, it is likely that we will lose the recycling points around the town, as everything will be collected from the doorstep.

Councillor Steady then left the meeting at 8.07pm to attend the Beach Hut AGM.

32. REPORT FROM JORDAN KNIGHT – YOUTH SUPPORT WORKER, ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL:

Jordan Knight thanked the Council for inviting him back and congratulated the Mayor on his new role. He said that he has great gratitude to be given Brightlingsea to work in, and has been to visit 4-Youth, and also helps with Dungeons and Dragons. A couple of months ago, he met with the Mayor, Councillor Howard and Councillor Barry, to discuss a Youth strategy in the area. Two things to come out of this meeting are an idea about starting a Youth Council – to get young people’s voices and opinions and feed them back to your monthly meeting. He said that he has reached out to the Colne Community School and has had a reply from the Assistant Head. They are happy to have ten pupils attend a Youth Council Meeting, during school time, and then Councillor Howard and I would attend, and get their voice and opinions. This may start in September, after the summer holidays. We would also like to change the view of different leisure activities for young people. Over the summer months, Essex Youth Service does not run, so detach workers can come out in the evenings, at a cheaper rate, hit the hot spots and change the narrative.

Councillor Howard asked if a letter could be sent from the Town Council to the Deputy Head of the Colne Community School to confirm that we are working with Essex Youth Service and Jordan Knight. This was agreed.

Councillor Pentney asked to be involved with this youth project.

Councillor Carr said that he had omitted an item earlier in the meeting, and that he has asked Photographer Stephen Johnson to be the official photographer for the council and asked for Councils agreement to this. This was agreed.

33. QUESTIONS FROM THE PUBLIC:

Q1) Would like to ask Councillor Chapman, when you said everything is to be collected kerbside, is this glass, tetra packs, textiles? Will we have different bags and boxes?

A1) Councillor Chapman replied textiles would probably be collected in bags, the decision is whether or not to have other wheelie bins. It will, however, be one container for paper, tetra packs etc, and another for margarine tubs and plastics. In 2026 single use plastic is coming in, including crisp wrappers, bread wrappers etc., but it will be mixed slightly. The decision on what is to be used has not yet been made.

Q2) As members of the Essex Association of Local Councils, and Councillor Court is your representative – can you ask them about the youth policy and how this fits in. They also have a committee that has access to Crime and Fire Commission. Can you ask what they thought about the terrible turnout for the vote? This election, none of the candidates put anything about the fire service, the plan, or some of the problems they face.

A2) Councillor Chapman replied that she has been in touch with the Fire Brigade to see if they would hold something like ‘coffee with cops’ and have a ‘coffee with fire brigade’.

Councillor Court said that he would like to learn more about the EALC and NALC, and yesterday he attended a virtual Coastal Community NALC meeting, and off this there is an opportunity for local councils.

Q3) When I recently drove down the Western Promenade, known as our Jewel in the Crown, at the end of it is a wreck of a building. When I joined the Council in 2019 Jean Howard and I went to try and sort it out. I note that in your FCA notes it says that you are awaiting a response from Batemans Tower Café by the 30th June 2024. What is the situation, as the building is not safe?

A3) Councillor Morgan replied that this Council is most worried and concerned about the situation of Batemans Tower Café and have repeatedly asked for updates, copies of structural surveys etc. We have asked the lease holder to report to this council by the end of this month.

A4) After watching a video on Facebook about Tendring tourism, Brightlingsea did not get a look in.

A4) Councillor Carr replied that we have contacted Tendring District Council to ask why Brightlingsea were not on the video, however the Town Council is making its own video. It is in production now, and we have asked members of the public to narrate.

A5) What is the income so far for the Heritage Pier?

A5) Councillor Morgan replied that we have taken our first deposit for usage of it and have received a lot of interest.

Q6) Is anything going to be done about the entrance to the Millenium Gardens on the Western Promenade? There is a nice area where flowers could grow, but now it is full of weeds.

A6) The Mayor replied that we will ask our Grounds Manager and will let you have our response.

Q6) When Councillor Morgan ran his last meeting, I asked a questions about tree planting and the survival rate. Can you confirm what this was?

A6) The Town Clerk replied that she did speak to the Grounds Manager and will do so again.

34. TOWN CLERK’S REPORT:

Agreed that Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service can hold a ‘Look for a Book’ and similar activities, in the Millenium Gardens on Thursday 8th August 2024.

Councillor Carr then moved, in accordance with the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960, in order to discuss items of a sensitive nature and items which are commercially confidential, the press and public be excluded. This was seconded by Councillor Court.

35. MOTION TO EXCLUDE THE PUBLIC IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PUBLIC BODIES (ADMISSION TO MEETINGS) ACT 1960 –To discuss the following:-

- Property Update.

36. PROPERTY UPDATE:

Brightlingsea Leisure Village – The Mayor informed members that he and Councillor Atkinson had been to the Solicitors, and a copy of their advice was circulated to all members. After discussion it was **agreed** that members would read the Solicitors Advice and let the Clerk know their comments. It was also **agreed** that a small working group would be formed consisting of Councillors Atkinson, Carr and Court.

Land Registry – Councillor Morgan informed members that a response had been received from the Land Registry, and that they would be writing to us with further information.

37. CLOSE OF MEETING:

There being no further business, the meeting closed at _____ pm.

Chair

Date: 18th July 2024