

HADSTOCK PARISH COUNCIL



Under the Chairmanship of Councillor Keith Nuttall
The Parishioners of the Village of Hadstock attended the
Annual Parish Meeting
On Thursday 18th April 2024
at 7.30 pm at Hadstock Village Hall

The Annual Parish Meeting is the meeting where the Parish Council reports to its electorate on its activities in the preceding year and Local Government electors may raise any matter of relevance to the Parish. Public and press are also welcome.
The meeting does not deal with or form part of Parish Council business.

Refreshments were available before and after the meeting

Fire notice and announcement that meeting may be filmed or recorded was noted

1. Welcome : The Chair, Councillor Nuttall, welcomed all to the Annual Parish Meeting of Hadstock, emphasising that this is a meeting for the Parishioners, encouraging villagers to take part to inform the Parish Council to aid their work. Cllr Nuttall indicated the fire exits and informed those present that the meeting could be filmed or recorded.

2. Apologies for absence : were noted from Cllr Jude Hannam

3. Minutes of meeting: The Chair presented the draft minutes of the Hadstock Annual Parish Meeting of held on Friday 17th March 2023 were confirmed and accepted by those present and duly signed by the Chair

4. Matters arising : would be addressed through the evening where relevant.

5. Chairman's summary report for Hadstock Parish Council April 2023- March 2024

Highways and Traffic

Traffic through the village remains a major source of concern, particularly speeding vehicles and very heavy trucks. The Speed watch team – which has now been operating for 10 years – continues to have a regular presence to try to persuade drivers to pass through the village safely and sensibly. Offenders exceeding the limits unduly are reported to the Police who then make contact with the drivers concerned. Efforts also continue to persuade Essex Highways (EH) to consider additional ways to slow drivers down but their much-publicised financial and personnel shortage problems make this a very long-drawn-out process. EH are of course responsible for the road surfaces, repairs and maintenance and you do not need me to tell you that this (admittedly very wet) winter has seen very slow progress in improving and restoring road quality – Potholes! At each PC meeting we continue to

highlight these issues to the appropriate County Councillors to try to have problems resolved – however we would urge village residents to contact EH directly to report specific issues of which they are aware.

Green Skip

The PC has agreed that this bi-weekly service operated by Uttlesford District Council (but paid for by the PC) will continue in 2024/25.

Recreation Ground

The PC continues to monitor the Rec which is a major village asset. Since the installation of the seesaw, there has been no new equipment introduced, though the large 'Burma bridge' is suffering from major wear and tear deterioration and we are looking at how this can be replaced in a cost-effective way – and playground equipment is very expensive. Minor repairs have been carried out to the fencing and some equipment.

The Chair introduced Cllr Johnson who gave a brief update on the work carried out on the recreation ground and gave an insight to future plans.

Emergency Plan

Spearheaded by Cllrs Lockton and Wells, and as a result of extensive research and consultation, the PC produced a comprehensive Emergency Plan for the village, which was then widely circulated and uploaded to the PC website.

The Chair introduced Cllr Lockton who reported that the Emergency Plan would be reviewed annually.

Planning Applications

The PC is consulted on all planning applications affecting the village/Parish. Over the last year there have been 10 ranging from a proposal for a small development to intended solar panel installations, conversions and changes of use. The PC reviews each of these applications and makes comments as appropriate – UDC as the local planning authority makes the final decisions.

UDC are now preparing a new draft Local Plan (which contains their future development proposals for Uttlesford) and at the time of writing this plan has gone through one of the statutory consultation processes the results of that will be known this summer. Further regulatory processes will be undertaken resulting in the new Local Plan hopefully being adopted in the summer of 2026. The draft plan continues to maintain UDC previous policies of allowing development in specific locations but maintaining the rural character of the region by restricting development in small villages. There are no plans that directly affect Hadstock – though as previously stated, expansion in other areas (and South Cambs) will impact (eg) road use.

Neighbourhood Plan

The parish council investigated the possibility of undertaking a neighbourhood plan for Hadstock and liaised with Ashdon Parish Council who produced a very useful and informative plan for their village. The idea of a neighbourhood plan is similar to a village plan but with weight given to planning applications particularly for new dwellings of which a village like

Ashdon is expecting a number. It was felt that Hadstock has protection and guidance adequately addressed within the local plan and of course much of the village is afforded direction related to planning as much of the village is a conservation area.

Environment

The PC continues to work with village volunteers to keep major footpaths central to the village from becoming overgrown (eg along the Linton Road – where the fencing has also recently been repaired). Volunteers have also worked on renovation of some village ponds, hedges/fallen trees (and on litter-picking in March). The apple orchard on the Rec has also been expanded with additional trees (thanks to a 'Tree Grant' from UDC).

A major initiative this year is 'Sustainable Hadstock' intended to move towards 'Lowering Carbon, Enhancing Nature and engaging the Community'. Thanks to a huge amount of work by Cllr John Lockton who is leading this effort, the proposal was awarded a Zero Carbon Grant by UDC earlier this year, and he and the core team are now working on the next steps to implement the ideas in the proposal. John will give a short presentation at the 18th April meeting.

Essex County Councillor Foley arrived

Linton Road

We continue to highlight (road surface and retaining wall) issues with Essex Highways. Repairs to the fencing along the path from Yews farm to the start of Len's path have been carried out. This sizeable but necessary expense was substantially alleviated thanks to District Councillor Moran who allocated some of his locality funding to us.

Finance

The official year end accounts will be available in June and posted on the website. All expenditure is available through the minutes of monthly meetings. The need for identified Reserves was discussed and the amount of general reserves would be clarified. At this point the end of year figures are to be completed for audit.

The Village Hall

As a result of the (increasingly successful) Village Hall committee efforts to cover running costs by hiring out the hall, the Parish Council monthly meetings from May 2024 will continue to be on the last Thursdays of the month but will start at the slightly later time of 7.45 pm

The Kings Coronation

This event seems a long time past but we celebrated it in Hadstock with a BIG LUNCH event on the Village Green. Like many of these celebrations it relies heavily on the good will of the residents who undertake much of the logistic management to achieve the end result and on behalf of the Parish we thank all those involved. We are also grateful to UDC who gave grant funding to many parishes in the district Hadstock included.

The PC plays a major role in the life of the village, often, as mentioned last year, 'behind the scenes.' We would really welcome applications to join 'the team' from Hadstock residents who would like to assist in making a contribution to the life of the village. If you think you

might be interested, please speak to me, one of the councillors or the Parish Clerk – we'll be delighted to talk.

It only remains for me to thank, County Councillor Martin Foley and District Councillor John Moran for their regular attendances at our PC meetings and all their help and advice. I wish to thank all the Parish Councillors [all named] for their efforts over the last year and in particular to appreciate the efforts of our very capable and conscientious Parish Clerk, Sara Beckett – Thank you!

New initiatives by new people are encouraged to join as members of the council would always be welcome.

A member of the public noted that income significantly more than in the previous year which was likely due to grant funding and wished to know more detail and also questioned the amount held in reserves.

The Clerk responded that £4795.00 for Sustainable Hadstock and additional funding from UDC towards the Kings Coronation celebration event and from Cllr Moran's ward funding towards the repair and replacement of fencing above Linton Road .

General reserves were held but none had been specifically earmarked but future earmarked reserves would possibly be allocated to grass cutting equipment. A clearer amount of reserve funds held would be evident at year end.

6. The Chair introduced Councillor Lockton : reported that Climate crisis is approaching at speed and locally this is evidenced by the lack of water and the warmest March ever. To make major changes requires Government but as individuals and as a community there are mitigation measures that can be achieved and this is **Sustainable Hadstock**.

Two aims of Sustainable Hadstock to promote significant change within the village and parish in relation to

- Environment
- Habitat

To include-

Mapping of habitats and consult with experts

Surveys of birds butterflies and wild flowers

Examine energy consumption from our homes - bring in expertise to answer questions

Conduct household surveys including using a thermal camera and share experiences and results

Launch of project in next magazine, stall at Fete and regular updates

Grant funding from UDC which has enabled project to develop

Additionally supported by Hadstock Parish Council, Hadstock Society, Village Hall and Parochial Church Council

Engagement required within the Village and encouraged to make contact and get involved.

At this point Councillor Nuttall wished to take a moment to remember Hamish who was a great supporter of all things Hadstock and a long-time member of the Parish Council for which we all give great thanks

The Chair introduced Councillor Wells reported on sessions that will be in the Village Hall [first session 19 April 2024] to demonstrate the uses and physical use of the defibrillator by two local doctors.

The Chair introduced Essex County Councillor Martin Foley: reported much of his correspondence and time relates to potholes all 22,000 of them and is very concerned about the condition of rural roads and lack of maintenance within the county. Councillor Foley spoke of his work within the Youth Strategy Group and the increase in attendance at Youth facilities and funding for a Skate Park which is now an Olympic sport. Councillor Foley also reported on Mental Health concerns which are evident in local schools.

7. The Chair invited an Open Forum:

A member of the public raised a point that as Hadstock is unlucky to have large heavy trucks coming through the village eroding the roads, should increased funding be available to these villages – Councillor Foley agreed and this was part of his ongoing work.

A member of the public raised a point about planning applications and had concerns of the input of the Hadstock Society to the Parish Councils considerations. Councillor Nuttall responded that all comments are welcomed for the Parish Council to consider.

The Chair of the Hadstock Society also responded noting that the Hadstock Society have been a consultee of planning applications for Hadstock for some time and did so as any residents of the village are able to do.

The Chairman thanked all for attending and closed the meeting