

PEBMARSH PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES

Of the meeting held 4th December 2024

Present: Cllr M Sharp, Cllr B Nott, Cllr L Darroux, Cllr J Rumsey,
Clerk – Mrs Shelley Boydell
District Councillors – Cllr G Spray
County Councillor – Cllr P Schwier
Members of Public – 0

MINUTES

1.(04/12/2024) Apologies for Absence – Cllr G Courtauld

2.(04/12/2024) Declarations of Interest – none

3.(04/12/2024) Minutes of previous Parish Council Meetings
The minutes were agreed by all and signed by the Chairman.

4.(04/12/2024) District / County Councillors Reports
Peter Schwier – 131,000 street lights have been replaced resulting in a 75% reduction in energy and a 39 million £ saving in 75 years. New lights are reliable and save money on engineers and emissions whilst providing better light. Discussed Essex Waste Strategy. Essex Business Summit has good turnout discussing grants, innovation and collaboration. September discount on compost for home composting sold almost 500. The tell us reporting tool on Essex County Council website is now simpler and quicker to use (link: <https://www.essexhighways.org/tell-us>). Essex County Council has 5000 miles of road and more traffic including HGVs on the road. Considerable pothole issue discussions and Parish Council ensured it was clear that the potholes in the village are not acceptable. Signage in the village is not all visible, it was suggested that an audit of the visibility of signs could be completed to highlight this, whilst requesting that owners of the land with overgrowing trees / hedges to help increase visibility of signs. Discussions regarding writing to MP with pothole issues. Essex County Council are looking at finalising budget, lots of statutory responsibilities (50%), residents should expect a small increase in Council Tax.

Gabrielle Spray – report circulated and noted (attached). Braintree District Council are expecting news of Government funding for councils for 25/26 on 19th December 2024, this will effect Council Tax levels. The Local Plan – lots of work going on in the background, advance notice of any areas in the Parish will be notified.

5.(04/12/2024) Clerk's Report - noted

6.(04/12/2024) Public Forum – no public present

7.(04/12/2024) Parish Upkeep & Village Matters

- a) Playground – applications underway
- b) Application for 20mph limit – Location for speed survey has been agreed and Clerk is to provide this to Essex Highways.
- c) Haul Road – surveys have begun.
- d) Village Hall car park – Levelling has begun. The Village Hall Management Committee are looking into grants for the resurfacing.
- e) The Village Sign will be re-pointed in the near future.
- f) First Aid Training - Clerk to gain interest for this event using social media in the new year.
- g) Speed Sign – this item has been put on hold until the outcome of the 20mph limit application.
- h) A "Save Our Shop" group has been set up comprised of residents and employees. Initial initiative is to have a Christmas Market awareness raiser in the Courtyard.

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8.(04/12/2024) Planning

- a) *Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a Conservation Area: Cut down Thulia Hedge Mill House Mill Lane Pebmarsh Essex CO9 2NW*
Ref. No: 24/02443/TPOCON
No Objections
- b) *Two storey front/side extension. Single storey side extension. Re-pitch roof from 35 degrees to 40 degrees and raise the ridge height to allow habitable rooms. Installation of new 4no. dormers, 8no. sky lights and 16no. solar panels. Render and change the roof tiles from concrete tiles with plain clay roof tiles.*
Caroline Cross End Pebmarsh Essex CO9 2NU
Ref. No: 24/02454/HH
No Objections

9.(04/12/2024) Finance

- a) *finance report noted.*
- b) *Review of Contractors – continue with current internal auditor, continue with Harrington for grass cutting (14 x £120) and footpath cutting.*
- c) *Budget and Precept Demand – Precept agreed at £17,000* **ACTION: Clerk to submit**
- d) *Update on possible purchase of Glebe Land – Parish Council to contact Strutt and Parker with an interest in purchasing the Glebe Land and ask for a figure –* **ACTION: Chairman to draft letter and circulate for agreement over email prior to sending.**
- e) *Village Hall Underlease Agreement – this item has been put on hold*

10.(04/12/2024) Items for Next Agenda

Mobile Phone mast / analogue phone switch off 2025

11.(04/12/2024) Dates of Next Meetings

12th March 2024 Parish Council Meeting followed by Annual Parish Assembly

Meeting closed 9.30pm

Signed by Chairman Cllr Michael Sharp

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REPORT for PEBMARSH PC – DECEMBER 2024

PLANNING: Essex County Council are in the process of delivering a **Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)**. This important document, which has been subject to a public consultation, will set out how the Essex local authorities can protect our countryside, enhance wildlife and identify opportunities for habitat creation. During the consultation period a lot of positive feedback was received from the farmer/landowner community who are keen to play their part in developing this strategy. Braintree Council submitted feedback, which has been acknowledged, and, together with other responses, this is now being collated by the Environment Climate Action and Green Infrastructure team at County before the document is finalised. The LNRS will be subject to review with Natural England suggesting the first review is likely to take place between 3-5 years.

Solar Farms: the Development Management team at Braintree Council continues to receive an increasing number of applications for solar farms, with developers engaging in pre-planning discussions with Officers before submitting their applications to the Planning Committee. There is clearly a balance to be struck between the need for alternative energy sources and protecting agricultural land. The Government has made it clear that there must be sound planning reasons for refusing such applications, however there are examples of refusals by local authorities being upheld by Inspectors at appeal but then being overturned by the Secretary of State and granted.

Budget 2025/26: Braintree Council's proposed budget for the next financial year was discussed by the Corporate Scrutiny Committee on Tuesday 19th November and then by the Cabinet on 25th November with the final Budget going to Full Council in February 2025. The Council's aim, as always, is to produce a balanced budget and protect services to residents whilst acknowledging that the financial situation for local authorities is challenging.

Gabrielle Spray
The Colnes Ward