

**Minutes of Bures Hamlet Parish Council Meeting**  
**Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> January 2025**  
**held at Bures Community Centre at 7.30pm**

**Present:** Cllrs J Chambers, M Elder, S Keeble-Fox, S Manning, K McAndrew,  
R Shackell, M Welch,  
**In the Chair:** Cllr R Shackell  
**Also present:** J Wright (Clerk), Cllr J Aries (BSMPC Chair), Cllr J McCrory (BSMPC rep)  
Cllr D Holland (BDC)

**01/01/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies received from Cllr P Schwier (ECC).

**02/01/25 DECLARATION/REGISTER OF INTERESTS/DISPENSATIONS**

To receive any 'pecuniary' or 'non-pecuniary' interests and dispensation requests.  
No interests declared and no dispensation requests put forward.

**03/01/25 MINUTES**

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> November 2024 (previously circulated) were duly approved and signed as a correct record.

**04/01/25 PUBLIC FORUM**

15 minutes maximum public participation

3 minutes for individual contributions unless agreed by Chairman

No members of the public present.

**County Councillor:** Cllr Schwier not in attendance to present a report. However, all correspondence between meetings from Cllr Schwier have been circulated. The Clerk noted on behalf of Cllr Schwier the following two items – ECC Sets out its Budget for 25/26 details, ECC, Thurrock Council and Southend-on-Sea City Councils agreement to work together to see momentous change in the way local government operates in Essex.

**District Councillor:** Cllr David Holland spoke on the following: Charges for the collection of green waste to remain at £55 for a fortnightly collection service. A consultation commencing 6<sup>th</sup> January and ending 2<sup>nd</sup> March asks residents to consider changes to the current recycling collections – 3 weekly collection of general waste, weekly food waste collection, alternate fortnightly collection of paper and card, alternate fortnightly collection of glass, metals, plastic, food and drink cartons, clear sack collections to be discontinued. Recycling banks to remain in place. Cllr Holland advised that parish councils are welcome to apply for a grant from his Councillor's £1,200 annual budget.

**Bures St Mary Parish Council:** Cllr McCrory reported on the following: Parish Clerk/RFO Georgie Turner has resigned and will leave her role on the 31<sup>st</sup> March. Central Stores has now re-opened. The licensing application will be considered at Endeavour House this coming Thursday. Some resident concerns raised regarding the proposed licensing hours however no objections raised by either the parish council or Suffolk Police. Next meeting of the parish council scheduled for Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> January 2025.

## **05/01/25 POLICE MATTERS**

**a) Issues raised with Community Policing Teams:** Essex Police are keen to increase visibility within the community and are considering trialling a new police meeting solely for the district's parish councils. These meetings would be held monthly online. Members agreed to join in with this new approach. Clerk to enquire the anticipated length of time for each meeting and numbers of parishes to be represented at any one time.

**b) SpeedWatch:** Cllr Jan Aries, CSW Lead Volunteer reported that the team has stepped down for the winter owing to poor light and cold conditions for the team.

## **06/01/25 HIGHWAY MATTERS**

Members noted that all LHP applications must be completed via a new online submission scheme.

### **a) LHP request updates:**

**1) Safer crossing point:** Cllrs Keeble-Fox and Shackell to prepare a questionnaire for signing by interested residents at the market in March. Also to gain support from the primary school parents with a view to submitting a request to the Local Highways Panel for a safer crossing point at Colchester Road.

**2) 30mph extension Lamarsh Hill:** The LHP request remains at Validation stage. Cllr Schwier following up as request has stalled.

**3) 40m/30mph Henny Road:** Cllr Holland reported that his request has not been followed up by the LHP. Speed surveys needed to be taken at 3 locations along the road. Also HGVs cannot be banned from Henny Road due to the number of farms/businesses that operate along its route. Matter remains ongoing.

### **b) Highway progress reports:**

**1) Water Lane pedestrian safety:** A TRO for double yellow lines at the junction and a single yellow line along Secretaries boundary wall has been rejected by residents and subsequently by Parking Partnership. A further TRO to be submitted to NEEP in 2025 for double yellow lines only at the junction. Clerk to follow up with Cllr Keeble-Fox.

**2) Water Lane flooding issues:** Nearby landowners had cleared their ditches of vegetation. A works order raised for ECC Highways to clear the brook. Environment Agency to be on site when works undertaken. Drains jetted on two occasions recently. Damage to pipes found and in hand for repair. Highways considering a long term solution of putting in a holding pond further up stream.

**3) Traffic congestion on market days:** Some residents remain concerned. BCLT have installed advisory signs to park at the station and claim the carpark fees at the market stall. Signs to be made more visible for the 2025 markets. Football club working with the SG Committee to ease the situation by phasing kick off timings and advisory parking notices.

**4) Bus shelter licences:** A retrospective process to register all bus shelters on Highways land being actioned by ECC. Clerk to register the two Colchester Road bus shelters. Following up with Passenger Transport who originally installed the bus shelters.

**5) Bridge Street resurfacing:** Bridge Street resurfacing completed.

**6) Station Hill tree root:** Remains in system. No repair date scheduled.

**7) Colne Road permissive path:** Cllr Keeble-Fox has spoken with White Dragon Activity Centre and advised them that a safer 'off road' route exists for those accessing the Centre from Bures railway station. She would therefore not be following up on the suggestion of a permissive path at Colne Road.

**8) Road bridge repairs:** Proposed closure planned for Summer 25. The works may last longer than the previously suggested 6 weeks. More information will be available once a contractor has been secured. Concerns raised regarding pedestrian access. Suffolk County Cllr James Finch offered reassurance that pedestrian access must be provided by law.

**9) ECC Service Level Agreement:** This was agreed by members and duly signed by the Clerk and the Service Provider.

## **07/01/25 PLANNING**

**Proposal:** Cllr Chambers to be main lead on viewing applications prior to a response being submitted to BDC by the Clerk – this was agreed by all members as a trial for contentious applications.

**a)** All applications received and comments made to date as per attached list.

**b) Applications requiring consideration at this meeting:**

24/0674/FUL Pine View, Lamarsh Hill – the parish council supports the application in principle however raised the following concerns – work on site cannot be allowed to continue past a second 3 year period, all conditions set for the previous application should also be set for this application, a statement on habitat and biodiversity needs to be submitted.

24/02650/FUL Land West of Colchester Road – this is a retrospective application – the parish council supports the application in principle however raised the following concerns – the 2 mobile homes should be removed, inaccuracies on the Design and Access Statement, number of buildings recorded on site appear incorrect.

24/02708/FUL Land adjacent No. 2 Normandie Way – members raised no objections.

**c) Colchester Road land sales:** Two illegal accesses created off the Colchester Road. Signs have been damaged – reported Ref 2939426. Land under a BDC Enforcement Case. BCLT remain interested in managing the water meadows if the land became available to purchase again. Cllr Holland continues to press BDC to make an Article 4 Direction on the land however this appears highly unlikely now.

**d) Jubilee Grove:** Cllr Shirley Keeble-Fox reported the following: The Jubilee Grove working party began to build a 'dead-hedge', which it aims to continue building in the spring. Some hedgehog homes are being built ready for the possibility of hedgehogs having babies and needing warm homes for them in the spring..A free supply of wildflower seed has been made available via the EA to create a wildflower area. National Landscape grant application had been unsuccessful. Cllr Keeble-Fox applying to Perrywoods for some grant funding. Grants being investigated to enable an accessibility path to be created around the grove.

**e) FP1,3 & 4:** Cllr Keeble-Fox's attempts to re-open a route which was closed during excavations for WW11 has been unsuccessful. This project had been an ongoing matter for numerous Parish Path Representatives over the years. The parish council agreed that its reinstatement will not be progressed due to lack of practicality and requirement.

**f) Ferriers Farm Barns:** Site owners are looking at commercial use for the barns. No further update. A planning application required to be submitted prior to any change of use for the barns.

**g) Chambers Bus Depot site:** The Flood and Water Management has been approved subject to conditions. The next item to be addressed is feedback from the Babergh Housing team.

**h) BDC Local Plan Review:** A revised timetable outlining a further round of public consultations scheduled for early January. Drop in sessions available for residents to share thoughts and ideas and ask questions. Mark Grimwood, Clarion Housing Officer invited to attend a meeting to discuss S106 agreements.

**i) National Grid Bramford to Twinstead:** The Secretary of State has approved National Grid's application to reinforce the electricity transmission network between Bramford substation in Suffolk to Twinstead Tee in Essex. Pre-construction survey work has begun with wider construction activity beginning in early 2025 and planned to be delivered by 2027. A united cross-county call to protect the East Anglia and Lincolnshire countryside has been made by Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk and Lincolnshire councils.

### **08/01/25 MATTERS ARISING**

**a) Bleed kits:** A speaker from the Daniel Baird Foundation to attend the Joint APM on the 24<sup>th</sup> March. The Clerk is in receipt of 3 bleed kits. Costs to install may be taken from the S137 budget. Clerk still waiting on approval from Greater Anglia for one of the kits to be installed at the station.

**b) BDC waste review consultation:** Refer to Agenda Item 4 District Councillor's report.

**c) Lamarsh Hill bungalows:** An Eastlight Housing electrician has agreed to inspect the lighting in the carpark under raised job number RR236773. Concerns also raised regarding some garden overgrowth – reported to the Estate Manager.

**d) Raising volunteer awareness:** To be promoted at the March market and at the Joint APM on 24<sup>th</sup> March.

**e) ECC Love Your Bus Fund:** Members agreed not to apply.

**f) RBL WW2 event:** The RBL has offered to assist in organising an event jointly with the two parish councils. Cllr McCrory and Cllr Elder following up with Ian Gibbs.

**g) Gov.uk domain:** Clerk gaining a quotation from One Suffolk for a website domain and email addresses on behalf of both parish councils. Clerk to look into storage costs for the email use.

### **09/01/25 BUDGET**

**a)** Following the decision of the Joint Sportsground Committee to reduce its 2025/26 precept request to the parish councils from £8,000 to £7,500 it was considered prudent for the parish council to reconsider its budget setting. The Clerk noted to members that the budget had been approved at the meeting in November and £8,000 set aside for the Joint Sportsground Committee. She also noted that it is normal practice for the two parish councils to contribute matching precepts to the committees. It was unanimously agreed to leave the budget as set but however to offer a further contribution of £500 to the SG Committee for 2025/26. It is suggested that all parties liaise earlier in the coming financial year to establish each committee's needs for the following financial year.

**b)** Precept request forms to Braintree District Council were duly agreed and signed.

**c)** The parish element of the Band D Tax Rate for 2025/26 is £98.04 – a decrease of 0.17% on the previous year.

### **10/01/25 FINANCE MATTERS**

**Business Instant A/C balance: £14,182.95 Treasurers Account balance: £1,571.56**

**a)** Finance and Budget monitoring report - noted, circulated and attached.

**b)** Bank reconciliation and verifying bank statements dated 7<sup>th</sup> January 2025 noted, circulated and duly signed by the Chairman and non-signatory member.

**c)** The Clerk had obtained the relevant information on Utility Aid Services with an aim to improve the electricity provider for the parish council. Utility Aid currently undertaking a market search for renewable energy options.

**d)** The rate of employer NICs to increase from April 2025. BHPC will be liable to pay £38.77 monthly on the Clerk's current salary

- e) Legal advice received from EALC confirmed that the Joint Sportsground Committee carries out functions on behalf of the two parish councils. It cannot register for PAYE. BSMPC is the lead parish council for the committee and employs the Clerk/RFO. The committee's Terms and Conditions should be reviewed by the lead parish council regularly. The Clerk noted that the Cemetery Authority is in a different position as Article 8 of the Local Authorities' Cemetery Order 1977 specifically provides for separate arrangements including the employment of staff.
- f) No request received to date for a contribution to a pending Bures Europa event. To be considered when such a request received.

#### **11/01/25 JOINT NHP AND JOINT PARISH PLAN 2024-25**

**a) Joint NHP:** The pre-submission draft Bures NDP has been screened to determine whether a Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) and or a Habitats Assessment (HRA) were required. Both were 'screened-out'. The screening assessment - carried out by the consultants appointed by the Bures NDP Team - and the joint determination notice issued by Babergh District Council and Braintree District Council are now published on their respective websites. Cllr Aries attended an online meeting regarding Devolution and Local Government Reform/Planning Matters. She stated that the message from the meeting is that NHPs should engage with the Government's housing targets and a NHP will be strengthened by identifying some allocated sites in the event of challenging planning applications.

**b) Joint Parish Plan 2024-25:** Items still ongoing: website/facebook and parish magazine improvements. Snippet pages being submitted to the parish magazine bi-monthly.

**At this point the Chair requested the meeting to continue after the 2 hours as per Parish Council Standing Orders. All members present agreed.**

#### **12/01/25 CLERK'S REPORT PLUS ANY CORRESPONDENCE RECEIVED FOR ACTION**

This had been previously circulated (attached and published on website).

The Government Consultation – Strengthening The Standards and Conduct Framework for Local Authorities in England has been noted by members at the meeting.

**13/01/25 REPORTS** - All reports had been circulated prior to the meeting. Councillors acknowledged receipt and were able to present questions by exception.

**Asset Report:** Cllr McAndrew had circulated his report prior to the meeting. Bus shelters clean and tidy. Tree branches around light at Woolpit Downs may need trimming back in the spring. All other assets reported in a satisfactory condition.

**Cemetery Authority:** Draft minutes of the meeting of 13<sup>th</sup> January 2025 circulated, published on the parish council website and available to view online. Next meeting - 10<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

**Sportsground Committee:** The draft minutes of the 9<sup>th</sup> January 2025 circulated, published on the parish council website and available to view online. Next meeting - 13<sup>th</sup> March 2025.

**Community Centre:** Minutes circulated from last meeting to members.

**Rights of Way:** Nothing to report.

**Primary School:** Cllr Fairbairn had circulated an update for members and this has been published on the parish council website and available to view online.

**Station Adopters:** No report.

**Tree Warden:** See Planning applications and decisions.

**Bures Common Land Trust:** Gill Jackson, Trust Secretary circulated her report prior to the meeting. A Christmas craft activity had been held in the barn along with a recital of Dickens' A Christmas Carol.

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**14/01/25 INFORMATION EXCHANGE/NEXT AGENDA ITEMS** - None put forward.

**15/01/25 DATE OF NEXT MEETING:** Monday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2025 to be held at the Garrad Room, Bures Community Centre at 7.30pm.

Future dates agreed 2025: Monday APM 24<sup>th</sup> March, AGM re-arranged to Tuesday 6<sup>th</sup> May, 14<sup>th</sup> July, 15<sup>th</sup> September, 17<sup>th</sup> November

The meeting closed at 9.45pm

Signed:

Chairman

Date

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