

Clerk's Report

Action taken under delegated powers (i.e. at Clerk's initiative)		Details	Action taken/outcome (updates on earlier items shown in bold)	Date of most recent update Bold indicates change since last meeting	Date closed Does decision need to be ratified?
	Apr-22	As a council which is exempt from an external audit, preparing for annual internal audit and publication of council records, and preparing annual accounts.	The council's internally-appointed auditor now has access to most documents, with endorsed bank statements and asset register still to be supplied. Annual accounts have been prepared and provided for April 2022 meeting, for approval at May 2022 meeting.	10 April 2022	Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR) will be presented for approval/completion before 30 June 2022 deadline.
	Apr-22	Arranging audit of Village Hall annual accounts	The council's auditor will also audit the Village Hall Trust accounts and indicate (for AGAR) whether the council has carried out its role as trustee properly. Accounts being prepared and will be sent to auditor within the next week or so.	10 April 2022	Auditor conclusion will be included on AGAR.
	Apr-22	Considering arranging registration of Village Hall plot at Land Registry	Checked Land Registry and Charities Act 2011 requirements and procedures. Sought advice from RCCE Village Hall adviser and made enquiries with Charity Commission. Both RCCE and CC advise instructing a solicitor. EALC/NALC can suggest specialist solicitor. Clerk will report to next trustee meeting (May 2022).	06 April 2022	Clerk will report to council meeting as trustee - in May 2022.

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	Apr-22	Local Councils Liaison Group meeting with UDC's CEO and Essex Highways officers and ECC cabinet member for Highways	Clerk attended on 23 March. See report to council meeting. Enquiries raised re maintenance of grass verges in parish and how to resolve uncertainty about the responsibility for maintenance. Response circulated.	01 April 2022	no
	Apr-22	Financial transactions	National increase in clerk's pay rates implemented from 1 April 2021 in accordance with clerk's contract of employment.	10 March 2022	Payment requires approval when made.
	Mar-22	Clerk is involved in Government Digital Service survey/research about promotion and use of gov.uk domain names	Attended meeting with Cabinet Office officials to discuss particular issues affecting Parish Councils. Provided feedback on proposed new advice on their website.	12 March 2022	12 March 2022
	Mar-22	Tree opposite Old Vicarage needing trimming, for safety of grass-cutting contractor	Tree Preservation order status checked - not protected. UDC confirms council is free to raise crown as recommended by contractor. Quote obtained but considered too high.	10 March 2022	Approval of work needed.
	Feb-22	New grounds maintenance contractor required and comparative quotes needed.	New contractor carried out first cut in March. Cost (from either contractor) will exceed budget due to higher fuel costs and reduced work done in last 2 years.	15 March 2022	On agenda 13 April 2022 for council decision

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	Feb-22	Checking which areas of grass are the PC's responsibility and/or which should be cut by PC contractor	Checked with owner of land adjoining Village Hall regarding land with bench and trees next to VH car park. Written confirmation of boundary obtained.	28 February 2022	10 March 2022
	Feb-22	Tree survey needed for safety and health of trees on common and possibly other trees owned by council.	Ash trees on common susceptible to disease, may need work. MWA Arboriculture quote is £550 (plus VAT which is recoverable).	03 March 2022	Decision taken 10 March 2022 to obtain expert report.
	Feb-22	Quotes for removing storm-damaged willow tree on Cherry Green common land	Three quotes obtained, waiting (at date of this report) to see who can do the work soonest. Tree surgeon chosen at cost of £420. Tree now removed from resident's garden. Trunk remains across a ditch on the common but not obstructing drainage or use of common.	03 March 2022	Ratified (ie approved in principle) 10 March 2022. Charges are for approval on 13 April 2022.
	Jan-22	Clerk asked Dept for Levelling Up etc via local MP to enable remote meetings as government has taken no action despite strong pressure from local council sector representatives	Official reply received: would need primary legislation, parliamentary time would need to be found for that, govt is still considering the results of the consultation on remote meetings held in mid-2021.	01 March 2022	10 March 2022

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	Aug-21	Proposed creating Village Hall working group to manage hall	Terms of reference of working group drafted. New NALC advice is to create committee. A committee could be appointed at the Annual PC meeting in May, or sooner.	10 March 2022	See below under 10 March 22 minute ref 22/03-7.5
	Jun-21	Tree warden has moved away.	No one has yet volunteered to act as tree warden. Decision taken to obtain expert report on tree safety/health - see minutes 10 March 2022, ref 22/03-7.2 below.	10 March 2022	Decision to obtain report 10 March 2022.
	Mar-21	Bus shelters and other items on Highways land	Essex County Council asked parish council to apply for licences for both bus shelters and any other fixtures on the roadside, to be approved by county councillor for district. Not yet applied for - clerk to complete	04 March 2021	
Meeting date	Minute ref	Action taken/outcome (updates on earlier items shown in bold)		Date of most recent update	Date closed
10-Mar-22	22/03-7.1	Internal financial control procedures	Cllr Holt to compare bank statements with cashbook and report any discrepancy.	10 March 2022	
10-Mar-22	22/03-7.2	A survey of the parish council's trees and those on the common is needed.	Clerk to obtain quotes in addition to the one of £550 already received.	10 March 2022	
10-Mar-22	22/03-7.3	Risk assessment shows that revised documents are needed in a number of areas, as specified in the assessment.	Clerk to prepare contingency plan for business continuity in her absence; clerk to update emergency plan as addresses etc have changed. Issues relating to common to be discussed by council.	10 March 2022	New plans to be approved by council in due course.

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10-Mar-22	22/03-7.5	Village Hall management structure	Clerk to consider committee structure and amendment to working group terms of reference for decision at May 22 meeting	10 March 2022	
10-Mar-22	22/03-7.7	Obtain additional quote for grass-cutting etc	Quote obtained 15 March 2022 and details circulated. On agenda for 13 April 2022.	16 March 2022	
10-Mar-22	22/03-7.8	Decide attendance at Local Council liaison meetings with CEO of UDC, scheduled for 23 March, 6 June, 6 Sept and 15 Dec	Clerk attending on 23 March. Representation at future meetings to be decided at meeting immediately before the date (May, July and November respectively). To be on agendas accordingly.	10 March 2022	10 March 2022
10-Feb-22	22/02-7.6	Find sources of help for the Neighbourhood Planning process	Clerk has requested advice from other clerks via EALC. No response except from other very small parishes wanted advice! See Neighbourhood Plan item below.	25 March 2022	
10-Feb-22	22/02-7.7	List of grants to be circulated	Circulated in minutes, to be approved at 10 March meeting	23 February 2022	10 March 2022
10-Feb-22	22/02-7.8	To fix date for Annual Assembly	Dates circulated.	03 March 2022	10 March 2022
14/10/2021 and 10 Feb 2022	21/10-7.8 and 22/02-7.4	Obtain quotes/obtain expert report on weeping willow tree at Cherry Green	MWA will be providing report. Inspecting 3 or 4 March 22. Decision on schedule towards felling to be on May PC meeting agenda.	17 March 2022	
11-Jan-22	22/01-3.0	To consider applying for a grant of up to £500 from the county council "locality fund".	No action taken yet. Funding no longer available.	31 March 2022	31 March 2022
11-Jan-22	22/01-5.1	Report broken footbridge next to "Happy Days" in Chapel End to Highways	Reported under reference 2760654. Response recvd 9 March "complex...as not on definitive right of way...further investigations needed".	10 March 2022	

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11-Nov-21	21/11-8.5	Propose a Local Highways Scheme and request approval by county councillor	Submitted to Cllr Foley 5 Dec 21 who approved it immediately and forwarded it to the Local Highways Panel and Rissa Long of Essex Highways. Will be on LHP agenda in February 2022 if not January 2022. Traffic surveys will be carried out before any decisions taken on speed or weight limits. Emails circulated to councillors as they arise. Henham Parish Council strongly supports plan and has asked their county councillor Ray Gooding to support it. It appears that the Essex Speed Management Strategy (ESMS) suggests speed limits max 40 mph, poss 30 mph. Clerk has contacted Highways and circulated to councillors.	01 February 2022	
29-Jul-21	21/7-8.1	Concern re UDC's response to planning appeal (Land south of Brick End)	Clerk to set out chronology so issue could be raised with UDC - not yet done as PC's solicitors advised not to raise complaint at this stage	5 Nov 2021	

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29 Jul 21, 9 Sept 21, 10 March 22	21/7-8.2, 21/9-6.8, 22/03-6.6	Neighbourhood Plan	To complete expression of interest forms for Locality when new tranche of funding is announced . UDC has designated area (=parish boundary). Funding of £2,500 awaited (will be an earmarked reserve) . Action plan to be decided. Public meeting planned for Annual Assembly date. Flyer advertising this was distributed with April 22 parish magazine. RCCE has advised briefly - see separate note for April 2022 meeting.	01 April 2022	
06-May-21	21/5-7.1	Check if Gigaclear would provide free broadband for a year	Roger and Phyllis Clark have not heard from Gigaclear in response to their application for "community hub" status for the Hall. No change.	30 May 2021	
06-May-21	21/5-9.1	Report damage to roadsign	Reported to Essex Highways - ref 2718888, photos sent. Also ref 2717622. Roadsign on Brick End Road has been repositioned but not by Highways. Problems with this and other damaged signs raised with Martin Foley as County Councillor. According to interactive map, work is being scheduled.	21 June 2021	

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11/03/2021 , 9 Sept 21	21/3-8 , 21/9-6.9	Condition of footpath across the grass opposite Prince of Wales and lack of clarity regarding who maintains, Highways (County Council) or parish.	Has been reported to Highways. Highways says they are not responsible for maintaining this path or grass/hedge bordering it. Land Registry searches show land is not registered so evidence of ownership is not publicly available. Enquiry raised (as advised by ECC) with ECC surveyors. They commented that it almost certainly belonged to ECC and if Highways were not maintaining it, ECC Property department would be responsible (by default). Map sent so they can advise us on ownership. Essex Highways response is that they are not currently responsible for maintenance of the area . Answer awaited from surveyors.	25 March 2022	
	21/2-10 and 21/3-8	Footpath markers	To check District Cllr Eke's records for condition of markers in parish and report any others which are missing/damaged.	20 March 2021	
13/02/2020	13	Cllrs approved plan to install an interpretation board.	19.2.20 Ken agreed to come to March PC meeting. R and P informed. 12 March 2020 working group formed. The Hundred Parishes Society is offering grants to fund the project. On agenda for 13 April 2022.	31 March 2022	