

Little Baddow Parish Council

Annual Assembly 2024

The Annual Assembly of the Parish Council was held in The Memorial Hall, North Hill, Little Baddow on Wednesday 8th May 2024 commencing at 7.10pm. The following members of the Council were present:

Chairman: Cllr P Irvine

Councillors: Ms. D. Ginn, Mr S. Scott, Mr K. Sheldrake, Mr A. Roche, and Mrs. Stephanie Scott

Welcome

Chairman Councillor Irvine welcomed Essex County Councillor John Spence; City Councillors Julia Jeapes, Jacob Armstrong, and Steph Scott and; Parish Councillors Mandy Hessing and Paul Churchouse (Danbury) and Charlotte Lyons (Sandon)

The Chairman thanked all the exhibitors for their displays.

Apologies had been received from Councillors Mrs. B. Teal and Ms. J. Hilton

Total attendance was 51 people.

Minutes of the Last Meeting

The Parish Councillors approved the minutes of the last meeting held on 10th May 2023 as a true and fair record of the meeting.

Introduction to Parish Councillors

Chairman Cllr Peter Irvine introduced the Parish Councillors and the Parish Clerk, thanking them for their work and support.

Chairman's Report

The Chairman started his report by drawing residents' attention to the recently distributed Village Newsletter that included many interesting articles on the village and the activities of the Council.

In particular the Chairman spoke to the following points that are of village interest and reflect issues raised by residents:

- **Traffic levels & Speeding** – the volume of traffic in the village is, unfortunately, out of the parish Council control and is expected to increase from continued development in the wider area. Speeding is a perennial issue in the village; following the request for a Safety Risk Assessment to be taken on The Ridge/North Hill, an Automatic Traffic Count was undertaken by Essex Highways last September. Disappointingly the conclusion by Essex Highways was that traffic was compliant with the 30mph speed limit. Council would welcome more volunteers for the Speedwatch Group to assist in the gathering of evidence to support further requests for traffic calming measures. In addition, Council is looking at purchasing Speed Activated Signs to encourage drivers to keep below the speed limit.
- **Paper Mill Lock Bridge** – parking issues are being addressed by the South Essex Parking Partnership through the deployment of wardens to enforce parking restrictions. However, Penalty Charge Notices can only be issued where vehicles are on the yellow lines and so extensions to the yellow lines and a Traffic Regulation Order to implement a Clearway parking restriction have been requested.
- **Development of Hammonds Farm** – Chelmsford City Council today issued their Preferred Options Plan for new development in the review of the Local Plan. Hammonds Farm has been included as a preferred option and will include 4,500 homes, Business Space, Country Park, schools and nurseries and Gypsy & Traveller pitches. The consultation period for comments on the preferred options

- opened today and will close on 19th June. Little Baddow Parish Council is objecting to the proposed development and encourages all residents to lodge an objection.
- **Memorial Hall & Sport Pavilion** – the upgrading of the hall and pavilion continues with many improvements completed and planned. A new kitchen has been installed in the Pavilion. The hall is the focus of a three-year plan to reduce its energy requirements through insulation and more efficient heating systems, saving both money and the environment.
- **Conservation Areas** – Parish Council is looking to register several of our heritage areas as Conservation Zones and an Independent Consultant has been retained to assist with producing the report and application.
- **New Woodland** – The Chairman was pleased to announce the completion of the purchase of two significant areas of woodland funded by public subscription. Fir Tree Wood which was fourteen acres at the end of Fir Tree Lane and five acres in Riffhams Chase adjoining the Sports Field. The Chairman thanked all those residents that contributed to make the woodland available for the good of all to walk through and enjoy.
- **Carers Club** – The Chairman was delighted to announce the formation of the Little Baddow Carers Club that will open to offer support, information and space for Carers to meet to share experiences. Parish and City Councillor Steph Scott is leading the project, based on her own experiences as a full-time carer, and with the support of County Councillor John Spence a grant to cover costs for two years was received from Essex County Council.
- **Councillor Vacancy** – there is a vacancy for a Parish Councillor and residents are encouraged to consider joining the Council to deliver the many improvements for the village that are planned. Please contact the Chairman or the Clerk for more information.

The Chairman closed by thanking the following people and teams for their hard work and support for the village:

- County Councillor John Spence
- Chelmsford City Ward Councillors Steph Scott, Julia Jeapes and Jacob Armstrong
- Mr Keith Hollingsworth for the production of the village Newsletter
- Little Baddow Cricket Club for their maintenance of the sports field

Chelmsford City Council Local Plan Review

The Chairman led a discussion on the Local Plan review and specifically the impact of the preferred option to build 4,500 houses on Hammonds Farm. The Consultation stage on the preferred options was announced today (8th May 2024) and will run until the 19th June 2024.

Little Baddow Parish Council is against the development on Hammonds Farm and has joined forces with Danbury, Sandon, and Boreham Parish Councils to communicate to residents the impact on the villages and how to object.

Five public meetings will be held in the next few weeks: Little Baddow, Sandon, Boreham and two in Danbury. Details of the meetings can be seen on the dedicated website: www.notohammondsfarm.co.uk

Residents are encouraged to attend one of the meetings and to make an objection to the potential development.

Reports (Inc Charities)

Written reports including the financial overview were in the Spring Newsletter with copies having been distributed to all households in the village at the beginning of the month. The reports from Charities are available on the Little Baddow website when published each year.

Guest Speaker

Cllr John Spence addressed the Assembly reflecting on his role as a County Councillor and his appreciation of working closely with City and Parish Councillors to deliver support and services to residents.

Cllr Spence continues to actively look at the need for parking areas at Paper Mill Lock and has pressed the ECC Cabinet member for Highways on potential sites.

Cllr Spence gave his insight on other significant issues and projects in the ward, mentioning:

- He is supporting the campaign against the closure of St. Peter's Hospital in Maldon.
- The need for a new link road between Maldon and the A12 at Hatfield Peverel to alleviate the serious traffic delays experienced on the A414 through Danbury resulting in 'rat runs' through Little Baddow.
- The building of the new Railway station at Beaulieu is a positive, however there are concerns over the timetabling of trains when opened and possible displacement of travelers using other stations that may increase traffic to the Boreham interchange.
- That Climate Change is a real issue, and we all need to look at finding new ways of doing things to improve the outcomes for the climate.

As the ECC Cabinet member for Health & Wellbeing Cllr Spence provided some background on his responsibility for the budget for Adult Social Care in Essex to deliver 'joined up solutions' for the growing mental health issues in the county. He is very supportive of the establishment of the Little Baddow Carers Club as a great initiative to provide local support.

Presentation of Community Awards

The Chairman was very pleased to recognise the work of the following residents in making the village a better place to live:

- Mr Paul Churchouse
- Mr Richard Hardman
- Mr & Mrs. Hardwicke

The Chairman presented a bouquet of flowers to Mrs Yvonne Spence as consort to Cllr John Spence.

Public Question Time

Many of the residents attending the Assembly raised points and joined the discussion about the Chelmsford City Council Local Plan review and the preferred option of building 4,500 houses at Hammonds Farm.

The meeting closed at 8.05pm

Chairman

May 2025