

Minutes of the Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 17th January 2018 at Greenstead Green Village Hall at 7.30pm. These are draft minutes and yet to be agreed by the Parish Council.

Present.

Cllr. Bill Dixey.

Cllr. William Fossick

Cllr. Paul Foster. Chairman.

Cllr. Derek Mason. Vice-Chairman.

Cllr. Pat Wickes.

Amanda Degnan – Clerk to the Parish Council.

Together with 5 members of the public.

1/18 Apologies for absence. Cllr. Thelma Ardley. Cllr. Chris Butler, County Cllr. Jo. Beavis. District Cllr. John O'Reilly-Cicconi.

2/18 Declarations of interest. To declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct. None declared.

3/18 (a) To approve the minutes of the previous meeting. With one minor spelling mistake corrected the Minutes were duly approved. **(b) Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting.** Cllr. Mason asked if Cllr. Butler should have remained in the room when the Council discussed 17/01551/FUL Froyz Hall. Cllr. Butler had declared a family interest at the start of the November meeting and written it in the Declaration book. The Chairman, Cllr. Foster, explained that he took the same approach as the previous Chairman with Councillors remaining in the room and not participating in the conversation unless asked a question. If the application concerns their land then there is a case for them to leave. Bloor Homes offered to send a simplified programme to the Clerk to distribute. This is yet to happen. Clerk to chase. Meeting with County Cllr. Beavis to discuss the role of the Local Highway Panel in prioritising highway maintenance works is yet to happen – Clerk to contact CC Beavis and arrange meeting. It was noted that a gullies sweep had taken place on the 16th January but was not completed. Ravens Hall Road had also been repaired but it was not satisfactory. Clerk to contact ECC Highways to see when gullies sweep will be completed and to ask about Ravens Hall Road repairs, copying in CC Beavis. Annie Webster who had wanted to hire the Playing Field for a private party had decided to hold it elsewhere. The Clerk had raised it with the Parish Council insurers who required additional information for the underwriters to make a decision. It was agreed that a policy for a similar request may be needed in the future. Alleged breach of planning permission at Russells Road – response from BDC Enforcement disappointing – nothing untoward and not prepared to take it further. It is felt that the matter had not been fully investigated. Clerk to email District Cllr. O'Reilly-Ciccone to ask him to contact the Enforcement Officer at BDC to take it further.

Hedge done. Drains in Star Stile Lane have been reported but are yet to be cleared. Clerk to raise with ECC Highways.

4/18 Public comment. Resident was unimpressed with the Parish Council's response to the Russells Road situation. The Chairman, Cllr. Foster, explained that the area surrounding Shardhigs had been referred to Officers and that the Parish Council were now asking District Cllr. O'Reilly-Ciccone to take it further. The resident will also get in touch with District Cllr. O'Reilly-Ciccone. Cllr. Wicks expressed concern about the water running down the road around the Bluebridge area. This had been reported to ECC Highways over the years. It is possibly a spring coming up and it was noted that the gullies are blocked as well. It was also noted that skips and a gate had appeared in the area possibly something to do with Anglian Water. Potholes in the area to be reported to ECC Highways. It was also noted that although the original pothole in Ravens Hall Road had been repaired another one had opened up. There was also flooding in the area as the drain was blocked. It was noted that ECC Highways was redoing the banks of the bridge at the bottom of The Street but had no funding for the drain. There was a brief discussion about ECC Highways and the pressure on them to respond to maintenance issues owing to a lack of funding. A resident asked if it was possible for the Perspex on the Parish Council noticeboard could be replaced as it was very dirty even though it had been cleaned. Cllr. Mason to look at it.

5/18 District Councillor's report. In the absence of the District Councillor there was no report.

6/18 County Councillor's report. In the absence of the County Councillor there was no report.

7/18 (a) To agree the accounts for payment. The accounts for payment were agreed.

(b) To approve the petty cash payments. There were no petty cash items.

(c) To agree the budget for 2018/19. The Chairman, Cllr. Foster, explained that there had been a Finance meeting the week before to discuss the Budget. He outlined the budget for 2018/19 which will result in an increase in the precept due to grass cutting, an increase in the Clerk's hours and a decrease in the Localism Fund received from BDC. It is noted that the Localism Fund will be zero in 2019/20.

The Chairman, outlined the two options to meet the costs for the increases. Option A: raise all the extra funding from an increase in the Precept; this would mean a Band D property would pay £29.52. The Band D rate for 2017/18 was £22.25. Option B: a small increase in the Precept from £22.25 to £23.44 with the extra funding coming from reserves. After a discussion the Parish Council agreed to Option B.

It was noted that the Village Hall still have to repay the Parish Council for an invoice that was paid on their behalf. Clerk to chase.

(d) Chairman to sign Precept papers. The Chairman, Cllr. Foster, signed the Precept papers.

8/18 Planning updates. Chairman. In the absence of any Planning Applications from BDC the Chairman, Cllr. Foster, provided a brief update on some recent Planning Applications. The TPO at the Church – all were approved for tree works except for the Scotch Pine as BDC were unconvinced they were the cause of the cracks in the church. The Glamping site at Froyz Hall had been approved. It was noted that the Halstead Gazette had reported that the Parish Council made no comment when, in fact, the PC's response was "No Comment". In future, the Chairman proposed that the term 'No Objection' should be used rather than 'No Comment' to avoid confusion. This was agreed. Laurel Cottage – this had been for information only. It had been granted as a 'lawful development' and satisfied the business use criteria as it was incidental to the enjoyment of the house. Halstead Cricket Club's application for a Score Board was approved. Oak Road- internal spine road – granted. The reserved matters application on this site has not yet been approved.

9/18 (a) To agree to the change of address of the bank account to the current Clerk.
Agreed. **(b) To agree to the Clerk becoming a signatory on the Current Account.**
Agreed.

10/18 Community Governance Review. To agree to Land East of Sudbury Road becoming part of Halstead. A letter had been received from BDC regarding the first stage of the Community Governance Review. This advised that following public consultation, BDC considered there were no overriding factors to amend the proposed boundary change to include the 'Land south of Oak Road' development within Halstead Parish which Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council had agreed to. The review has moved on to the second stage. BDC is now proposing that the 'Land East of Sudbury Road' development boundary should also be transferred to Halstead Parish. There was a discussion and it was agreed that the same arguments for Oak Road applied – namely, that the residents of the new development would adjoin the Halstead urban area and would naturally look to Halstead to meet their day to day needs rather than Greenstead Green.

Proposal: We as a Parish Council have no objection to the proposed boundary move of Land East of Sudbury Road – That the Halstead Parish boundary be extended to include the proposed Public Open space to the North of the Residential Development site and Halstead Cricket Club. The boundary to be defined by the centre of Sudbury Road to the East, the centre of Star Stile to the North and the track to the East.

Decision: The Parish Council unanimously agreed to accept the proposed boundary change.

11/18 Children's Play Equipment and safety matting at the Playing Field. Update. Open Spaces Action Plan. Update Cllr. Mason provided an update on the Playing Field. The Basket Swing will be installed on 23rd February. He has received a quote for replacing the safety matting of £18325 plus VAT. It was noted that the matting is not dangerous at the moment but if ignored it will get worse. The Parish Council asked Cllr. Mason to obtain two more quotes to get a comparison of costs and to investigate funding streams. It was noted that the lifetime of safety matting is 10-15 years. The current matting had been down for 12 years. It was noted that matting has to be used due to the equipment having solid concrete bases. The new swing will come with matting and is disability friendly.

Cllr. Mason advised that the Climbing Frame needs replacing and the slide and swings need painting. Cllr. Mason had also spoken to Greenwatch about fundraising. At the village fete they may set a stall up by the Play equipment to ask people what they want.

Cllr. Mason was thanked for his work.

The Open Spaces Action Plan was discussed. It was noted that there was some S106 money available.

12/18 Telephone Box Penny Pot Corner. To discuss whether to adopt the telephone box.

The Clerk read out an email from BT confirming that if the telephone phone box was adopted it would belong to the Parish Council. There was a discussion on what to do with it. Cllr. Ardley had sent the following comment in regarding the BT Box: 'When I first mentioned this, my idea was for it just to be cleaned but left as B.T. property. It does not need to be adopted, bought or moved.' There was agreement amongst the PC that the 'phone box should be adopted and that consideration should be given to selling it in order to benefit the parish.' It was agreed to place this item on the next agenda. The Clerk was asked to contact BT to clarify who is responsible for the cost of disconnecting the power.

13/18 Update on Website. Cllr. Mason. Cllr. Mason had instructed James Gray to build the website. There was a discussion on what to include on the website. Cllr. Mason asked for any suggestions to be sent to him. He will also circulate an email regarding the website to everyone for feedback. It was noted that the Chairman, Cllr. Foster, had received an email from a member of the public with suggestions for the website which he had forwarded to Cllr. Mason.

14/18 To receive reports from outside bodies, training courses, Village Representatives, Parish Council Committees and Advisory Groups. Cllr. Mason reported that Stisted Parish Council had organised a Saturday shopper bus fortnightly to Braintree. It is currently undersubscribed and it is suggested that it could be extended to start and finish in Greenstead Green. Free to bus pass users and £3.00 for others. There was a discussion on how to publicise it. It was suggested that the PC advise Stisted PC that we will try it for a month, although a start date would need to be publicised. Jean Hastings of Neighbourhood Watch, had sent an email to the Clerk asking people to get in contact with her if they would like to receive news and information regarding neighbourhood watch.

Greenwatch is going well with another quiz night planned for 23rd March in the Village Hall. They need more volunteers. They are involved with organising the Summer Fete with the Church which will be held on 27th July. Meeting planned for 5th February. Cllr. Mason advised that volunteers have been out with the Speed Gun and several people have been caught speeding.

15/18 To note any items of correspondence. An email had been received from Mr Clifton Brown regarding fencing on land at Brooks Farm. It was noted that this land is in Stisted. Clerk to write back to him to explain this and forward the email on to Stisted.

16/18 To consider any items of urgent business. (Chairman). None.

Signed.....

Chairman – Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council.

**Amanda Degan – Clerk to the Parish Council. 8 Nuns Meadow, Gosfield. 01787 274992.
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