

**Minutes of the Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council held on Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2020 on ZOOM at 7.30pm.**  
**These are draft minutes and yet to be agreed by the Parish Council.**

**Present.**

Cllr. Chris Butler

Cllr. Bill Dixey.

Cllr. Paul Foster. Chairman.

Cllr. Derek Hambling

Cllr. Ian Pleasance

Cllr. Derek Mason. Vice-Chairman.

Cllr. Pat Wickes.

Amanda Degnan – Clerk to the Parish Council.

District Cllr. Peter Schwier

Members of the Public - 5

**156/20 Apologies for absence.** County Cllr. Jo Beavis.

**157/20 Declarations of interest. To declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct.** None were declared.

**158/20 Item 1: To approve the minutes of the AGM.** These were duly approved.

**Item 2: To approve the minutes of the May ordinary meeting.** With one minor amendment these were duly approved.

**Item 3: Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meetings. Item 145/20 (Item 120/20) – Gypsy Encampments and Police Powers Consultation.** Cllr. Butler apologised that he had failed to submit a response within the deadline. **Item 150/20 – Burtons Green sign – No longer being pursued.**

**159/20 Public comment.** A member of the public expressed concerns regarding the condition of the village fingerposts and felt they needed improving. Cllr. Hambling explained that all the fingerposts, bridges and footpaths had been reported to Essex County Council (ECC) Highways Department who have been out and assessed them as fit for purpose including the broken fingerpost. Cllr. Hambling also reported that he had already repaired one fingerpost. Another resident reported that the two footbridges over the ditches on the westerly footpath opposite Cllr. Hambling's house are rotten. They also expressed thanks to the work parties who have cleared some of the footpaths. A question was raised regarding the condition of the stile opposite Cllr. Hambling's house. **Action:** Clerk to report bridges and stile to Highways.

A question was asked about moving or replacing the Salt Bin on the corner of Crocklands. **Action:** Cllr. Mason will take some photos of both the current and proposed position to show Highways.

The Playing Field hedge was raised. This cannot be cut until September due to nesting birds.

**To be noted:** Thanks, were expressed to Peter Trumpeter for his kind donation of soil and wood for the flowerbeds.

**160/20 County Councillor's report.** In the absence of Cllr. Beavis there was no report.

**161/20 District Councillor's report.** Cllr. Schwier expressed his apologies for not attending the May AGM and meeting. He was impressed at how quickly the Parish Council had moved to virtual meetings.

With regards to the fingerposts and footpath issues he suggested writing to the ECC PROW officer directly and copying in County Cllr. Jo Beavis. He added that it may also be worth looking at alternative forms of funding to repair them as they are a heritage asset.

**Braintree District Council (BDC) –** most people are working from home and have adjusted well to the changes. Meetings are now back on track via Microsoft Teams or ZOOM. The redevelopment in Manor Street is back on track as is the pedestrianisation of Braintree High Street. ECC Environmental Officers and the Police were out in Braintree during the weekend to see that everyone complied with the easing of the Lockdown rules.

**District Council Community Grants-** Cllr. Schwier hopes to distribute his grant across all his wards. It was noted that these are not just for Parish Councils but for charities as well.

**Local Plan-** The Planning Inspector had advised that two of the three Garden Communities needed to be removed from the joint local plan in order for it to be found sound. BDC has asked the inspector for his modifications to enable Plan 1 to pass. This will be discussed in public by BDC in July.

**Gypsies-** Cllr. Mason asked about the recent influx of Gypsies. Cllr. Schwier confirmed that they are being tracked by the Police and BDC.

**162/20 Chairman's Report. Cllr. Foster.** The Chairman, Cllr. Foster explained that this report would normally be read out at the Annual Parish Meeting in May but due to the Lockdown this meeting had been cancelled. He reported that from April 2019 to March 2020 the Parish Council had been consulted on 13 Planning applications and appeals and had only objected to 4 including the Bournebridge Hill development. In May 2019, the Parish Council welcomed Cllr. Ian Pleasance to the council as the representative for White Ash Green. The Defibrillator was fitted in May 2019. New Standing Orders and Financial Codes were agreed in September and the Emergency Plan was updated. A precept of £10,000 was raised in January. This was due to the loss of the Localism grant from BDC. In March 2020 it was agreed to move the bank account from NatWest to Barclays. Finally, the CIF grant was spent on replacing the safety matting in the Playing Field. It is hoped to secure more funds to replace playground equipment.

**163/20. Finance. Item 1: To agree to continue membership of RCCE at £52.80.**

Proposed: Cllr. Mason, Seconded Cllr. Wickes. All agreed. Approved.

**Item 2: To agree the accounts for payment.** These had been circulated prior to the meeting. Proposed Cllr. Mason, Seconded Cllr. Hambling. All agreed. Approved.

Standing order	Mrs A.J. Degnan	£300.00	15/7/20 Salary
Standing order	Mrs A.J. Degnan	£300.00	15/8/20 Salary
877	Playground Facilities	£8,387.68	Safety Matting
878	Richard Edwards	£342.00	Audit
879	Playsafety RoSPA	£94.80	Safety Audit
880	Village Hall	£274.20	D.Cllr grant for hall
881	Mrs A.J. Degnan	£50.00	Outstanding Salary A-J
882	M D Landscapes	£1,426.80	Grasscutting April-June
883	Mrs A.J. Degnan	£32.09	Mileage £9.90 Stamps £7.40 Zoom
	above incs Office Expenses		£14.39
884	RCCE	£52.80	Membership
885	Neighbourhood Watch	£100.00	Donation
	<b>Total payments for July 2020</b>	<b>£11,360.37</b>	

**Item 3: Update on change of bank. Clerk.** The Clerk reported that she had been trying to contact Barclays by telephone on several occasions without success at getting through. She had visited the branch in Braintree who confirmed that it was necessary to make an appointment via the 'phone. There is still an hour wait. She will keep trying. **Action:** Place on September agenda.

**164/20 Planning: Item 1: To approve the minutes of the Planning Meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020.** Proposed Cllr. Mason, Seconded Cllr. Dixey. All agreed. Approved.

**Item 2: Matters arising from the minutes of the Planning meeting.** The Parish Council continued to object to the Bournebridge Hill development. They objected to Stones Throw, Crocklands planning application which they felt was not in keeping with the surrounding area. Stanstead Cottage – no objection.

**Item 3: Earthworks at The Cangle, Star Stile Lane. Issue raised with Planning. Update.** Cllr. Dixey had asked the Clerk to raise this with Planning at BDC as a possible breach. The earthworks were similar to those used by motocross as they were levelled out at the top. Planning Enforcement had visited the site and felt no infringement had occurred, but it is now on their radar if raised again.

**Item 4: Mystycroft retention of containers. Update** This was now out for consultation again after being interrupted by the Lockdown. The Clerk confirmed that the Parish Council's objection is on the Planning website.

**165/20 Item 1: To consider developing a Neighbourhood Plan and applying for funding to employ a consultant.** An email from Jan Stobart of the RCCE had been circulated prior to the meeting which contained information on Neighbourhood

Planning and an offer to attend a meeting. The Chairman, Cllr. Foster provided some background to the Neighbourhood Plan including that there were grants available for consultants to carry out most of the work. It was felt that Halstead and Gosfield needed to be consulted to see if they were intending on developing a plan. After some discussion it was agreed to ask Jan Stobart to attend a meeting on Neighbourhood Planning. **Action:** Clerk to contact Jan Stobart to arrange a meeting.

**Item 2: To consider a response to the Coggleshall Neighbourhood Plan.** The Councillors felt this was a detailed plan but noted that Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish had not been consulted during the development of the plan even though they have a border with Coggleshall. **Action:** The Chairman, Cllr. Foster to draft a response and circulate to the other Councillors.

**166/20 Playing Field: Item 1 Update including broken chair and safety matting.** Cllr. Mason reported that the safety matting work was completed. He was awaiting a quote from Playground Facilities and Wickstead regarding a new climbing frame. He will be looking at grants for this. The chair is repairable but the bench by the slide now has broken slats. Cllr. Dixey offered to look at the bench by the slide. Cllr. Butler asked about the placement of the bench in memory of Ken Wisby on the concrete plinth and it was confirmed that this could go ahead as the power point for the Playing field will not be going through there. **Action:** Cllr. Dixey to look at the bench by the slide, Cllr. Mason to sort out repairs to the broken chair.

**Item 2: To consider items raised from the RoSPA report.** Cllr. Mason is waiting for quotes regarding repairs to the slide and seesaw. The report raised concerns regarding the front gate and lack of signage. Cllr. Mason will look at this. It was reported by a resident that the Burtons Green Road side gate does not close properly. **Action:** Cllr. Mason to repair the gates.

**Item 3: To consider applying for a new CIF grant for purchasing items for the Playing Field and decide what those items will be and size of grant.** Cllr. Mason. The Clerk was instructed to apply for the maximum grant available for a climbing frame and associated safety matting. Cllr. Mason to supply quotes. **Action:** Clerk.

**167/20 To decide if the Parish Council wish to take part in the Salt Bag Partnership 2020/21.** **Action:** Clerk to ask BDC if the salt can be returned if not used at the end of the season. If yes, then the Parish Council will take part in the partnership. If no, then the PC will not take part as there is still some salt left.

**168/20 To agree to adopt the Code of Conduct as adapted from Braintree District Council's Code of Conduct.** Proposed Cllr. Mason, Seconded Cllr. Hambling. All agreed. Therefore, it was unanimously agreed to adopt the Code of Conduct.

**169/20 To agree to adopt the following Core Documents:**

- a. **Antibullying and Harassment Policy**
- b. **Community Engagement Policy**
- c. **Complaints Procedure**

- d. **Data Protection Policy**
- e. **Disciplinary Policy**
- f. **Equality and Diversity Policy**
- g. **Grant Award Making Policy**
- h. **Grievance Procedure**
- i. **Risk Assessment**
- j. **Training Policy**
- k. **Whistleblowing Policy**

It was agreed to adopt these all en-bloc. Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Mason. All agreed. The above core documents were duly adopted.

**170/20 To accept the Asset List as a correct record.** Note these are items the Parish Council own but not necessarily insure. Proposed Cllr. Mason, Seconded Cllr. Dixey. All agreed as a correct record.

**171/20 Update on Greenwatch's request to place a pole on The Green for the SID.** The meeting was opened to Bob Dobson who reported that the pole had been bought but is yet to be installed. It will be removeable when not in use and will be bolted into place when used and the SID padlocked to it.

**172/20 To receive reports from outside bodies, training courses, Village Representatives, Parish Council Committees and Advisory Groups.** Cllr. Wickes reported that there had been no more updates from Earls Colne Airfield. Cllr. Pleasance reported that there is now a café on the site.

Cllr. Hambling reported that he had received a request for a socially distanced picnic to take place on the Playing Field in August. Depending on the conditions at the time there was no issue with this.

Cllr. Butler provided an update on the condition of the village hall. This had been redecorated internally but due to the previous leaks there was still a problem with salt coming through and causing the paint to peel in one area. He had no concerns at the moment.

Cllr. Pleasance asked if the Parish Council had been consulted on the Crowbridge Farm development off Chapel Hill, Halstead 40 homes appeal. He wishes to raise an objection. **Action:** Clerk to check.

Gigaclear – is coming to White Ash Green. Cllr. Pleasance wishes to be involved in the design stage to avoid the exchange boxes being put in the wrong place. This may come before the Parish Council. Cllr. Butler also reported he had been approached by Gigaclear to put cables across his land but had heard nothing since the initial approach..

**173/20 To note any items of correspondence. None.**

**174/20 Future agenda items.** Standing Orders, Emergency Plan.

There being no further business to transact the Meeting closed at 9.45pm.

Next meeting Wednesday 9<sup>th</sup> September 2020 7.30pm. Venue to be confirmed.

Signed.....

Chairman – Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council.

Date.....

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