

**Minutes of the Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 13<sup>th</sup> January 2021 via ZOOM at 7.15pm.**

**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.

County Cllr. Jo Beavis

Together with 5 members of the public

**1/21 Apologies for absence.** District Cllr. P. Schwier

**2/21 Declarations of interest. To declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct.** There were no interests declared.

**3/21 (a) To approve the minutes of the previous meeting.** Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Mason. All agreed. Therefore, the minutes were duly approved. **(b) Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting. Item 202/20 –** Item 159/20 Moving of Salt bin – due to Covid situation this had not happened yet. **Item 202/20 –** Item 179/20 Goalpost repairs– Cllr. Mason had chased Itsagoal but due to the ongoing Covid situation Itsagoal is currently closed.

**4/21 Public comment.** A comment was made regarding potholes, the state of the signposts and bridges on footpaths. These had all been reported to Essex County Council (ECC) Highways and were working their way through the system.

**5/21 County Councillor's report.** County Cllr. Beavis updated the meeting on the following:

- in contact with Cllr. Pleasance regarding the flooding at Sloe Hill, missing cats' eyes in Halstead Road and potholes
- it is expected that county and district meetings will continue virtually until the Summer
- May elections might be delayed
- Footpaths and potholes are being repaired
- ECC budget to see a rise of only 2%

- Vaccination centres- a request has been put in for one to be opened in Halstead
- There is funding for businesses during this Lockdown period
- Visiting of Care Homes has been stopped due to the rise in cases

Councillors commented that the roads were in much better condition with repairs being carried out quickly. Cllr. Beavis noted that there needed to be better signposting of repairs. A member of the public raised the issue of signs not being collected after roadworks being completed. This is due to the signs being installed by a different company to the one carrying out the works. Cllr. Beavis noted this issue.

Cllr. Mason spoke about a litter pick which had taken place in Greenstead Green. 48 bags had been filled and a lot of the rubbish was alcohol related. He asked if Braintree District Council (BDC) could do something about littering. Cllr. Beavis will send a written question into BDC regarding this issue.

Cllr Beavis congratulated Cllr. Mason and the Clerk, Amanda Degnan, on securing funding for the playground of £1500 from the County Councillor fund.

The Chairman, Cllr. Foster thanked County Cllr. Beavis for her report.

**6/21 District Councillor's report.** There being no District Councillor present no report was received.

**7/21 Precept/Budget 2021/2022 Item 1. To agree and set the budget.** The Chairman, Cllr. Foster, updated the Parish Council meeting on the Finance Meeting which took place on 6<sup>th</sup> January where the budget and precept were discussed. The Parish Council had decided on a small increase of 4.5% or £1.69 based on a typical Band D property. This increases the Band D figure from £36.39 (2020/21) to £38.08 (2021/22) and an overall budget of £10,450.24. It was noted that, whilst funding had been received from the CIF fund and the County Councillor fund for the new climbing frame, there was a gap which will be covered by reserves. Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Hambling. All agreed. **Item 2. To agree and set the precept.** It was agreed to set the Precept at £10,450.00. **Item 3. Chairman to sign the Precept.** To be signed at the weekend. **Action:** Clerk and Chairman.

**8/21 Finance: Item 1. To agree the accounts for payment.** Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Mason. All agreed. The accounts were duly approved.

Cheque Number		Payee	Amount	Reason
896		Mrs A J Degnan	£38.10	
SO		Mrs A J Degnan	£300.00	15/01/21 Salary
		<b>Total payments for Jan 2021</b>	<b>£338.10</b>	
		February		
SO		Mrs A J Degnan	£300.00	15/02/2021 Salary
		<b>Total payments for Feb 2021</b>	<b>£300.00</b>	

**Item 2 Online banking update – Clerk.** Clerk updated the meeting on progress. She will reapply to NatWest for online access. **Item 3. To instruct Clerk to find a new Payroll provider to start 1<sup>st</sup> April 2021.** The Clerk reported that the current payroll provider, Ladywell, is closing. It was agreed that she should look for a new provider. Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Hambling. **Action:** Clerk.

**9/21 Planning. Mystycroft. (BDC ref 20/00282/FUL) – failure to remove containers. Cllr. Wickes.** This planning application had been refused permission in July 2020. Cllr. Wickes reported that 4 containers had gone but 2 remained and are still being used. The right to appeal against refusal ends on the 31<sup>st</sup> January 2021. It was decided to wait until then before escalating to Planning Enforcement.

Cllr. Hambling noted that changes had been made to the Bournebridge Hill planning application and loaded onto the BDC Planning portal on the 7<sup>th</sup> January 2021. The Parish Council is yet to be consulted on these changes.

**10/21 Playing Field. Item 1. County Councillor Grant update – Clerk.** This had been covered by County Cllr. Beavis Agenda Item 5/21.

**Item 2. To agree the purchase of the Climbing Frame and associated safety matting.** Cllr. Mason had received 3 estimates. The cheapest, £14,787.61 plus VAT, had been received from Playground Facilities. Cllr Mason suggested that some of the work, such as removing the old climbing frame, could be carried out by volunteers in order to save some money. This would reduce the estimate down to £13,300 plus VAT. After some discussion it was decided to go with the reduced estimate of £13,300 plus VAT from Playground Facilities. Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Dixey. Agreed.

**Item 3. To receive costings for a new gate and associated materials for the Playing Field and agree to apply for a District Councillor grant to purchase said items.** There was some discussion on this. Cllr Mason agreed to inspect the gates and report back about the work to be carried out.

**11/21 Flooding. Item 1 Crocklands.** There had been no flooding but it was felt that the new drains were on the wrong side of the road. It was noted that the contractors had not finished the scheme due to lack of time. County Cllr. Beavis will check what is happening and report back.

**Item 2. A131 - blocked drains at Penny Pot. Cllr. Foster.** The Chairman, Cllr. Foster reported that the road is constantly wet. Cllr. Butler explained that it is not water coming off his fields but rather a drain under the road by opposite 1 & 2 Pennypot Cottages is blocked and needs flushing. He has tried to clear it but has been unsuccessful. County Cllr. Beavis will check.

**Item 3 A131 - Continued flooding at the entrance to Oak Road off A131 near Bentall's Farm. Cllr. Dixey.** Cllr. Dixey reported that this road floods every year. Highways pump the sump out, but it is blocked under the road. He also raised concerns about Knights Farm Corner in Earls Colne where the hedge and verge have been pushed into the pond, Ravens Hall Road, and that the drains/ditches at Star Stile Road have still not been cleared despite being reported several times.

County Cllr. Beavis asked Cllr. Dixey to send her an email with all the points raised and she will take it forward. **Action:** Cllr Dixey.

**12/21 Earls Colne to Halstead Cycle Route. EC2H. Cllr. Hambling.** Cllr. Hambling is Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural's representative on this project group. He provided an update on progress so far. The route is currently scheduled to go from Earls Colne to Kelvedon. It is hoped to continue to Coggeshall and from Earls Colne to Halstead. Cllr. Butler confirmed that the land from A1124 to Halstead Fire Station is owned by the Butler Trust. The next project meeting will be on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2021. County Cllr. Beavis was delighted to support this project with £2000.00 from the County Councillor grant.

**13/21 BT Box at Penny Pots. To consider painting it.** Cllr. Mason will obtain a quote for painting. **Action.** Cllr. Mason

**14/21 To update the Open Spaces Action Plan.** Landowner to be added. Clerk to update. **Action:** Clerk

**15/21 Noticeboard. Update. Action:** Clerk to give keys to Cllr. Mason.

**16/21 Stisted. Update on waste tip opposite Brooks Farm.** It was reported that rubbish is still there, but it is possible they are waiting for the weather to improve before removing the waste..

**17/21 White Ash Green. Item 1. To agree to refurbish the bench on the green, including replacing the perspex over the text which has broken.** Cllr. Pleasance to send pictures to Cllr Mason. **Action:** Cllr. Pleasance.

**Item 2 – To look at approaching Essex Highways to install ‘Welcome to White Ash Green’ signs, with speed limit, at both ends of the Hamlet. Cllr. Pleasance.** Not to go ahead now due to residents’ concerns at placement of signs.

**18/21 To receive reports from outside bodies, training courses, Village Representatives, Parish Council Committees and Advisory Groups.** The Chairman, Cllr. Foster provided an update on a virtual meeting which was held to reinstate the Braintree Association of Local Councils (BALC). A working party has been set up to progress this. County Cllr. Beavis was pleased to see this being discussed.

**19/21 To note any items of correspondence.** None.

**20/21 Future agenda items.** Payroll

**21/21 To agree date to sign cheques and documents.** Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> January 2021.

There being no further items to discuss the meeting closed at 21.00.

**Signed**.....

**Chairman – Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council.**

**Date**.....

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