

Minutes of the Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council held on Wednesday 9th March 2022 at Greenstead Green Village Hall at 7.15pm
These are draft minutes and yet to be agreed by the Parish Council.

Present.

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. Chris Siddall

Two members of the public

19/22 Apologies for absence. Apologies had been received from District Cllr. Peter Schwier who was unwell.

20/22 Declarations of interest. To declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct. There were no declarations of interest.

21/22 Item 1: To approve the minutes of the previous meeting. The following were amended: 6.22 trail should be trial. 10.22 'in the area' changed to 'White Ash Green.' The minutes of the January 2022 meeting were than duly approved.

Item 2: Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting. Agenda Item 10.22 Item 1 TRAF7759 speed reduction to 40mph. The PC's request that the speed limit be reduced to 30 mph had been submitted. However, the speed limit had been confirmed as 40mph. **Item 2 Burtons Green HGV restrictions and photos.** Cllr Hambling advised that there is an Essex County Council (ECC) Highway's scheme for HGV weight restrictions proposed but it is under Halstead not Greenstead Green, so it is does not relate to Burton's Green. It was noted that any HGV restrictions would not stop business lorries based in Burtons Green. Email from resident regarding the SID had been replied to by the Clerk to the resident's satisfaction. **Agenda Item 12/22 Open Spaces Action Plan:** The clerk confirmed this had been sent to Braintree District Council (BDC). **Agenda Item 14/22 Jubilee.** To be discussed under Agenda Item 33/22. **Agenda Item 15/22 Letter from Chair of Hennys.....regarding National Grid.** The Clerk confirmed that she had replied to him. **Agenda Item 17/22 Cadent.** The licence for works had been agreed and signed by the Clerk with work to start in April.

22/22 Public comment. A resident asked about a refresher course on the use of the Defibrillator. Cllr. Mason will look into it. **Action:** Cllr. Mason.

23/22 County Councillor's report. County Cllr. Chris Siddall provided the following update:

- ECC budget has been increased for 2022/3
- ECC is one of the most efficient councils in the country
- County Councillors grant of £10,000 for next year but £5,000 is ringfenced for climate change projects
- Highways – more money to be spent on filling potholes
- Cycle path – Earls Colne to Coggeshall has been approved for a feasibility study.

Cllr. Dixey thanked County Cllr Siddall for his help in getting work moving on the Star Stile area highways issues.

Cllr Mason asked about ECC Highways and their decisions regarding planning applications. County Cllr Siddall had already spoken to the County Councillor Lee Scott, Cabinet Member for Highways, about some of the decisions made. County Cllr. Siddall had also invited County Cllr Scott to accompany him on a tour of the district to look at highways' issues. Cllr Wickes asked about the cycle path and its use by pedestrians and cyclists. County Cllr. Siddall confirmed that there will be signage in place reminding people of the cycle paths joint use.

24/22 District Councillor's report. Due to the absence of the District Councillor, there was no report.

25/22 To agree the accounts for payment. Proposed Cllr. Mason, Seconded Cllr. Hambling. All agreed. The motion was duly carried.

BACS		Greenstead Green Village Hall	£48.00	Hall hire paid 15/2/22
BACS		Mrs A Degnan	£316.67	salary pd 15/2/22
BACS		Mrs A Degnan	£316.67	March salary
BACS		Mrs A Degnan	£14.20	Expenses
BACS		Unipar Services	£1,020.00	Speed gun + VAT
BACS		Greenstead Green Village Hall	£16.00	hall hire 9/3/22
		Total payments for March 2022	£1,731.54	

26/22 Planning and Braintree District Council Planning applications. Item 1:

APPLICATION NO :22/00473/ELD DESCRIPTION: Application for a Certificate of Lawfulness for an existing use - The residential use of land and garage/building in association with the dwelling known as Chaseways, Russells Road, Halstead, Essex, CO9 1SP LOCATION: Chaseways, Russells Road, Greenstead Green. 'No Objection' Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Dixey. All agreed.

Item 2 Planning updates: App. No. 19/00493/OUT, Land Off Bournebridge Hill, Greenstead Green update on previous night's Planning Committee attendance (Cllr. Foster). The Chairman and Vice-Chairman had attended the previous night's Planning Committee meeting to object to this development which had been

recommended for approval by officers. The following statement had been read out by the Chairman, Cllr. Foster to the committee:

'... Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural PC has consistently objected to this application since it was originally submitted 3 years ago. We have carefully read the committee report and we strongly believe the planning officers have incorrectly judged the planning balance in recommending approval subject to a s106 agreement for five clear reasons.

Firstly, the benefits of the Halstead bypass have been judged to have significant weight. What is being delivered is a 600m length of road built to a standard width of 7.3m that would constitute the first stage of a relief road plus some land for a roundabout. The officer's report acknowledges that the bypass may never be constructed; there is very little certainty that it will be. The proposed development will deliver only a fraction (7.5%) of the 8km corridor shown in Part 1 of the draft local plan. With public finances under severe pressure, the reality is that the remaining 7.4km could only be funded on the back of future unallocated housing development. Until the completion of the rest of the bypass to Colchester Road, we will have significantly more vehicles travelling through Halstead and adding to the congestion at the pinch point at the junction of Head Street, Hedingham Road and Colchester Road which is already at full capacity already.

Secondly, the Council's 5-year housing land supply has changed dramatically over the past 3 years. At the time of the application, Gladman were confident that the Council could not meet its requirement. The recent appeal decision at Brain Valley Avenue, Black Notley confirms a land supply of 5.1 years which will be significantly increased when Part 2 of the new LP becomes adopted. The tilted balance argument no longer comes into play so the need for new housing on this unallocated site falls away. This should be given significant weight.

Thirdly, Essex County Council's objection to the development on minerals safeguarding remains in place. Sand and gravel resources have not been properly identified by the applicant. ECC believe that the mineral beneath the 13.5 ha site could and should be used prior to development taking place. How can this development be sustainable when the construction of 200 houses will sterilise for ever a resource of significant economic importance – sand and gravel which could be used in the construction of the development. Countryside Properties were required to do just that at Beaulieu Park by Chelmsford City Council.

Fourthly, officers claim that the site is accessible to Halstead's services and facilities by foot. The report claims that residents can be expected to walk to the nearest bus stops which are between 420 and 500m from the centre of the development. The report makes no reference at all to the topography of accessing the town's facilities. The 60 secondary school pupils generated by the development are expected to walk the 2.8km to Ramsey Academy up, down, and back up a steep incline. In contrast, the new Bellway Homes scheme off Sudbury Road is less than 1km from the school. The reality is that most residents will use their car to take children to school because this site is not a sustainable location.

Finally, we consider that the landscape and visual impacts will be significant. The site is closely connected to the town of Halstead because it forms part of the Bourne Brook Valley. The

development will be highly visible from the A131 and from Plaistow Green Road to the south. The development would extend into the countryside and add considerably to the peripheral southern extension of Halstead in the form of a large housing estate. It would thereby exacerbate and extend development in a suburban style, out of keeping with a landscape character which is highly sensitive to change. This is judged to be a significant adverse benefit.

In summary, we hope that you challenge the officer's recommendation and refuse this application because of the reasons listed above.'

The Planning Committee voted by six votes to four with one abstention to refuse the application against the officer's recommendation. Cllr. Mason expressed concern to County Cllr. Siddall that ECC Highways had raised no objection to the proposal. Cllr. Mason felt this was partly due to the applicant's traffic survey being conducted during 'Lockdown' when there was less traffic around. It was noted that the applicant may appeal the decision. If the appeal procedure is by an inquiry, the Council may decide to apply to become a 'Rule 6' party and be allowed to present evidence and question the appellant's evidence.

27/22 Highways: Parish councillors reports. Greenstead Green - Cllr. Hambling – the footpath at Claverings is impassable.

Star Stile - Cllr. Dixey – reported that the sump at Oak Road/A131 Bentals corner had been flushed out, but the road still gets flooded although it now only takes six hours to clear instead of longer. County Cllr. Siddall explained it should only take 3 hours to clear and that the complaint should be raised again.

White Ash Green -Cllr. Pleasance raised the issue of Deer warning signs again and the lack of verges in the White Ash Green area. He had complained to ECC Highways about the new Gosfield road sign blocking a footpath on the corner of Russells Road. He had also spoken to both private schools in the area who had placed signs advertising open days on parish council land in White Ash Green. These notices had now been removed.

28/22 Playing Field: Item 1. Update on installation of new gate. (Cllr. Mason). It was agreed that Cllr. Mason could use his own carpenters to install the gate. He will also look at the fencing and latches. **Action:** Cllr Mason. **Item 2. Update on new information signs. (Cllr. Mason).** Cllr. Mason will look at the RoSPA report to see what information is required on the signs for the gates. There will need to be a contact number on them. He will also provide a sign for the new climbing frame. **Action:** Cllr. Mason. **Item 3. New goalposts. (Cllr. Hambling).** Cllr. Hambling had installed these. He was thanked for all his work in obtaining and installing the new goalposts.

29/22 To consider installing a defibrillator in the old BT 'phone box at Penny Pots. (Cllr. Hambling). Cllr. Hambling had been approached by a resident about installing a defibrillator in the old BT 'phone box. After, a brief discussion the Councillors agreed that the parish council will not be placing a defibrillator in the 'phone box.

30/22 To consider writing a letter to UK Power Networks regarding the recent power cuts and the need to update the network in this area. The Clerk explained that this item had been suggested by District Cllr. Peter Schwier who had written a letter of complaint to UK Power Networks regarding the recent power cuts. It was agreed that the clerk obtain a copy of Cllr Schwier's letter and then write to UK Power Networks supporting his comments. **Action:** Clerk

31/22 Councillors Emails. To confirm that all councillors have access to their new emails. Some councillors have access to their Councillor email addresses. Cllr. Pleasance will reissue the login details and offered help in sorting out the mailboxes. This needs to be done by the May meeting. **Action:** Cllr. Pleasance.

32/22 Annual Parish Meeting: Item 1. Update on guest speaker. (Clerk) The Clerk reported that she had sent an invite to The Hon. James Cleverly MP but as Minister for Europe, the war in Ukraine may influence his ability to attend. It was suggested inviting the Chairman of BDC. **Action:** Clerk. **Item 2. To consider what type of refreshments to provide.** It was suggested looking into a light buffet for up with a maximum cost of £100 and using a local caterer. Clerk to investigate. **Action:** Clerk.

33/22 To receive reports from outside bodies, training courses, Village Representatives, Parish Council Committees and Advisory Groups.

Greenwatch –Jubilee - there will be a dance on Saturday 4th June in Cllr Butler's barn - £5.00 adults, under 12's free, bring your own food and drink. Sunday 5th June there will be a picnic in the playing field with entertainment. There is a Greenwatch meeting 21st March 2022 to discuss plans for the Jubilee Weekend. Mandy from the Pottery Barn will be providing mugs for the children to decorate for the Jubilee. There may be a competition for 'Best decorated house or/and hat.' Mandy has sponsored the bunting. It was noted that the parish council have budgeted £500 for the Jubilee.

Cllr. Hambling had attended a Braintree Association of Local Councils meeting on ZOOM. County Cllr. Siddall was the guest speaker. Cllr. Hambling had helped EC2H clear the disused railway line near Halstead for the cycle path from Earls Colne to Halstead. He asked Cllr. Mason for help in clearing tree stumps along the rail track with a digger. The footpath is to be moved on to the old track. Cllr. Hambling will send Cllr. Butler a report as part of the cycle path is on Cllr. Butler's land.

34/22 To note any items of correspondence. Noted. The Clerk had received an email regarding the Ride London cycling event taking place in the area. Cllr. Pleasance offered to attend the virtual meeting if it does affect the parish. Clerk to forward email to him. **Action:** Clerk and Cllr. Pleasance.

35/22 Future agenda items. None.

There being no further items to discuss the meeting closed at 9.07pm. Next meeting will be the Annual Parish Council Meeting 11th May 2022 at **7pm** in the village hall.

Amanda Degnan

Clerk to the Council.