

Minutes of the Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 11th May 2022 at Greenstead Green Village Hall at 7.18pm directly after the AGM. 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. Chris Siddall.

District Cllr. Peter Schwier (arrived 7.18)

2 members of the public

44/22 Declarations of interest. To declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct. None declared.

45/22 Item 1: To approve the minutes of the previous meeting. Proposed: Cllr Dixey, Seconded: Cllr. Pleasance. All Agreed. The minutes of the March 2022 meeting were therefore duly approved.

Item 2: Matters arising from the minutes of the previous meeting. Agenda Item 17/22 Cadent: No start date had been received yet for road works in White Ash Green. **Agenda Item 22/22 Public comment -Defibrillator training:** Cllr. Mason is waiting for a defibrillator for Braintree Athletics Club. Once received he will set up a joint training session on Defibrillators. **Agenda Item 30/22 Letter to UK Power Networks:** Clerk had emailed District Cllr. Schwier asking for a copy of his letter. District Cllr. Schwier will send a copy of the letter to the Clerk. **Agenda Item 34/22 Ride London meeting.** Cllr Pleasance reported that this did not affect the Parish so there was no need to attend the meeting.

46/22 Public comment.. None.

47/22 County Councillor's report. Essex County Council (ECC) County Cllr. Siddall was welcomed to the meeting by Chairman Cllr. Foster. County Cllr. Siddall provided the following update:

- Bournebridge Hill – road to be repaired
- Sloe Hill – flooding issue is being reprofiled

- Cycle path – work progressing on it. The Earls Colne to Coggeshall part is going ahead.
- Oak Road, Halstead – applying for Quiet Lane status
- £280 million for the repair of potholes. All ECC Councillors have been asked to provide a list of 38 potholes to be repaired.

County Cllr. Siddall then took questions from the meeting. Cllr. Dixey reported that ECC Highways had done a temporary repair in Star Stile Lane but nothing else. County Cllr. Siddall to investigate further.

There being no further questions Chairman Cllr. Foster thanked County Cllr. Siddall for his report.

48/22 District Councillor’s report. Chairman Cllr. Foster welcomed Braintree District Council (BDC) District Cllr. Schwier to the meeting. District Cllr. Schwier provided the following update:

- It is hoped to hear soon from the Planning Inspectorate regarding Part 2 of the Local Plan.
- Attending Planning and Licensing committees
- Jubilee: information on BDC’s website about events
- Involved with a working panel looking at enforcement strategies
- Planning Enforcement had increased by 5 staff members
- New BDC Chairman Cllr Andrew Hensman is the first Autistic Chairman in England.
- There is a statement on BDC’s website regarding Weathersfield Airfield, the proposed prisons and the Ministry of Justice.
- He had complained to the cabinet lead for Planning about S106 money from large developments taking place in the parish not going to Greenstead Green but instead to Halstead. This is now being looked at.

District Cllr. Schwier then took questions from the meeting. Cllr. Mason raised concerns about delays regarding planning decisions. District Cllr. Schwier explained the Planning Committee is now meeting twice a month whereas last year it had been once a month but will feedback concerns to the cabinet lead for Planning. Cllr. Mason also raised concerns regarding ECC Highways and recent decisions made by them regarding large scale developments. It was felt that S278 agreements should be required by ECC to obtain funding for highways from developers. BDC is also looking at Community Infrastructure Levies (CIL) for developments.

There being no further questions Chairman Cllr. Foster thanked District Cllr Schwier for his report. District Cllr. Schwier left the meeting at 7.50pm

49/22 Finance: Item 1. To agree the accounts for payment. Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Mason. All agreed. The motion was duly carried.

SO		Mrs A Degnan	£333.34	April Salary pd 15/04/22
BACs		EALC and Nalc	£198.26	membership fee
BACs		BALC	£40.00	membership fee

BACs		BHIB	£589.08	insurance
BACs		Richard Edwards	£366.00	Audit
BACs		D.Mason	£539.00	Gate
BACs		Village Hall	£16.00	11/5/22 meeting
BACs		Village Hall	£16.00	19/5/22 meeting
SO		Mrs A Degnan	£333.34	May Salary to be pd 15/05/22
BACs		Mrs A Degnan	£14.00	Expenses
		Total payments for May 2022	£2,445.02	

Item 2. To agree to the Clerk reclaiming VAT of just over £856.25. Proposed Cllr. Hambling, Seconded Cllr. Mason. All agreed. The motion was duly carried.

50/22 To receive and approve the Annual Governance Return. (AGAR) Item 1: The Annual Internal Audit Report is received and noted. Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Dixey. Received and noted. **Item 2: The Annual Governance Statement (Section 1) is approved.** Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Dixey. All agreed. Approved. **Item 3: The Accounting Statements (Section 2) are approved.** Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Dixey. All agreed. Approved. **Item 4: The Certificate of Exemption is approved.** Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Dixey. All agreed. Approved.

51/22 Planning and Braintree District Council Planning applications.

Item 1: APPLICATION NO :22/00939/FUL DESCRIPTION: Stable block and equestrian manege with a 30m x 45m exercise arena. LOCATION: Ayletts Farm, Plaistow Green Road, Greenstead Green. Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council made the following response 'No Objection' subject to landscaping being put in place on the north boundary. Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Dixey. All agreed.

With the Chair's discretion the following two applications were discussed:

APPLICATION NO :22/01166/VAR DESCRIPTION: Variation of Condition 2 (Approved Plans) of permission 21/02218/FUL granted 06/04/2022 for: Erection of 1 x two-storey detached dwelling and attached outbuilding utilising existing vehicular access. Variation would allow: -Dwelling to be extended to the rear and balcony at rear over approved flat roof. LOCATION: Land Southwest Of, Westwell, White Ash Green. Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council made the following response 'No Objection.' Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Mason. All agreed.

APPLICATION NO: 22/01034/FUL DESCRIPTION: Detached cart lodge/garden store LOCATION Forest Nursery, White Ash Green, Halstead Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council made the following response 'No Objection'. Proposed Cllr. Pleasance, Seconded Cllr. Hambling. All agreed.

Item 2: For information only. Application Number 21/03699/HH - Brambles, White Ash Green, Halstead. Cart lodge. No Objection. Cllr. Pleasance declared an NPI. Planning decision – pending.

Application Number 22/00773/HH - The Coach House, Russells Road, Greenstead Green. Granny wing. No objection but with the condition that it cannot be sold off as a separate unit. Planning decision – pending.

Application Number 22/00682/HH - Lone Star Barn, Gladfen Hall Road, Greenstead Green. Changes to windows. No objection. Planning decision – pending.

Application Number 22/00697/HH - Star Stile House, Colne Engaine Road, Greenstead Green. Retention of tennis court. No objection. Cllr. Dixey declared an NPI. Planning decision – pending.

Application Number: 22/00473/ELD – Chaseways, Russells Road, Greenstead Green. Certificate of Lawfulness for an existing use. Land and garage. No objection. Planning decision – Granted.

Update from BDC Planning Committee meeting dated 19th April 2022 attended by Cllr. Foster regarding Halstead Hall and Land North of Oak Road. The Chairman, Cllr. Foster had attended the BDC Planning Committee meeting along with Cllr. Pell from Halstead Town Council to object to these two applications which had been recommended for approval by BDC Planning Officers. Chairman Cllr. Foster had read out the following statements regarding these two applications:

App Ref 21 02449 FUL – Halstead Hall, Braintree Road, Greenstead Green

Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council was initially supportive of this application when we were consulted in August last year. The applicant appeared to have taken on board the reasons why the August 2020 planning appeal was dismissed. That appeal sought permission for a 25-unit dementia unit with enabling development of 30 bungalows to fund the unit. At the time, the Planning Inspector found that the Council could only demonstrate a housing land supply of 4.4 years. The Inspector also found that there is an inadequate provision of specialist dementia care and that this is likely to result in a significant need in the coming years. He gave the provision of a 25-bedroom specialist dementia care unit significant weight.

So why is the Parish Council now objecting to the scheme?

Firstly, the description of the proposed development before you is, as submitted in August 2021, a 25-bed dementia unit and the erection of 20 bungalows. There is no mention of any houses.

Yet, the scheme is materially different to that which is before you tonight - from 20 bungalows to 14 houses and 6 bungalows. It is unclear why officers have decided not to ask the applicant to reapply as the description of the development is incorrect and misleading.

Secondly, the site is unallocated in both the adopted Local Plan and in the emerging Section 2 Plan. The fact that the Council can now demonstrate that it has a 5-year housing land supply means that the titled balance no longer applies. Sites which are proposed to be allocated within Section 2 which will become adopted allocations and significantly boost the Council's 5-year land supply. As members will recall, they voted to refuse planning permission last month for 200 houses at Bournebridge Hill, Halstead, on the grounds that the Council can now demonstrate a 5-year housing supply.

The proposed 20 residential units are therefore contrary to both the NPPF and the Development Plan. If the Council is to be consistent in its approach to unallocated sites in the countryside, then it needs to refuse this application for the same reason as the Bournebridge application. In the planning balance, officers have incorrectly given significant weight to the provision of six affordable units and only moderate weight to conflict with the development plan when it should be the opposite - the principle of residential development on this site is contrary to policy and should be given significant, not moderate weight.

Thirdly, this application comprises two distinct elements – the dementia care unit and the 20 dwellings – and they are not linked. The need for more dementia care is abundantly clear as Care England has stated in its response. Yet, there is no guarantee whatsoever that the dementia unit will ever be built. Members should give very significant weight to the statement by your officers at paragraph 14.3.4. The applicant can choose never to implement the dementia unit, yet they are free to build 20 dwellings for profit.

Fourthly, the proposed legal agreement makes no provision for any financial contribution towards Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish. The parish has an open spaces plan which sets out where section 106 money should be directed. The Council's officers have disregarded this.

Finally, we are concerned about the removal of 64 trees and 11 groups of trees which will be lost as a result of the development, of which 50 are to be removed due to poor condition. As officers state, most of the trees are not managed with many trees dead and dying and most in need of basic crown pruning maintenance works. The applicant has failed to carry out even basic management of its own estate – this should be given significant weight in arriving at a decision in respect of tree management

In summary, therefore, we ask members to refuse this application on the same reason as the Bournebridge Hill application – the harm arising from the conflict with the Development Plan outweighs the stated benefits. **This application was granted by 9 votes to 3 with S106 monies going to Halstead.**

App Ref 21 03101 FUL – Land north of Oak Road, Halstead

Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council accept that the principle of residential development has been accepted on this site which lies just within Halstead Town Council's area. We have two concerns about this development.

First, we wish to express our concern about the impact of generated traffic upon Oak Road, Letches Lane, and Tidings Hill. These roads are likely to become considerably busier and more congested when this development is fully occupied. Officers state that future residents will have a variety of options such as walking and public transport. The site is 1.3 km from the nearest pharmacy and 1.6km from the nearest food store. The reality is that most people will drive.

The site is 1.2km from the nearest primary school and almost 2km to Ramsey Academy School. The development will generate 21 primary school aged children and 14 secondary school aged children. The reality is that most parents will probably take their children to school by car, adding to more traffic on these roads.

The Parish Council questions officers' views that this is a sustainable location with access to services and facilities within easy reach of walking.

Secondly, the Parish Council is concerned that the landscape masterplan that accompanies the planning application makes very little provision for new trees and hedgerows along the southern edge of the site with Oak Road. This will form the new boundary between the southern urban edge of Halstead and the rural countryside. The landscape and visual assessment that accompanies the planning application does not refer to views into the site from the south along Tidings Hill. The photo viewpoints in the addendum to the LVA, notably viewpoint 5 from public footpath 88-21 and photo viewpoint 7 from public footpath 88-22 shows that there are significant gaps in the existing intervening tree cover. Moreover, the photographs were all taken in May 2018 when trees and hedgerows were in full leaf. There is no recognition in either the LVA or the addendum that there will be greater landscape intrusion into the rural countryside from this development during the winter months when viewed from the public rights of way network to the south of the development. This is also not referred to in your officer's report.

We would therefore ask that a new condition is added to the recommended list of conditions, requiring the applicant submit a detailed landscape mitigation scheme prior to commencement of development which specifically addresses how the impacts of the development will be mitigated with additional landscaping along the southern edge of the development. This should include photo viewpoints taken during the winter when the site is more exposed to views from the south. We would wish to be consulted on the draft scheme so that our

views are taken into account by officers. This application was granted but with the understanding that the landscape boundary was improved from that shown.

52/22 Playing Field. Item 1: Update on the installation of new gate for Playing Field. Cllr. Mason This had been installed. It was agreed that a new hasp and combination padlock should be purchased and fitted to the gate to prevent unauthorised access. A sign will also be placed on the gate with details of who to call to gain access to the site. Cllr. Hambling reported that he had re-staked the goalposts and placed a sign on them explaining why they should be secure. Cllr. Mason and Hambling were thanked for their work in these matters. **Action:** Fencing and small gate to be added to next agenda. Cllr Mason to purchase hasp and combination padlock and sign. **Item 2: Update on new information signs. Cllr. Mason.** Cllr Mason had ordered 'No Dogs' and 'Play Equipment to be used under adult supervision' signs. He will fit them when they arrive.

53/22 To decide if the Parish Council wish to take part in the Street Cleansing Agreement. It was proposed not to take part in this. Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr Butler. All agreed. **Action:** Clerk to inform BDC of decision. To note that Chairman Cllr. Foster is now a 'Green Champion' in his area.

54/22 Highways: Parish Councillors reports. Cllr Butler reported that the drains are still blocked at Ravens Hall Road and now smell due to the sewage drain being blocked 2 weeks ago. This had been an ongoing situation for 10 years. Highways clear the gullies but not the drain which is the problem. To be reported. The road to Greensted Hall has potholes.

Cllr Wickes – Burtons Green- deep pothole outside her house. To be reported.

Cllr Pleasance – White Ash Green (WAG) – Still have a problem with the verges being eroded at WAG and the sign to Gosfield blocking the footpath. Cllr Pleasance asked if Russells Road could be made a Quiet Lane. **Action:** Quiet Lanes to be placed on the July Agenda. Cllr Pleasance left the meeting at 8.38pm

Cllr. Wickes asked a question of County Cllr. Siddall regarding the provision of schools in the area and funding for them. County Cllr. Siddall replied that Halstead Town Council had also asked this question and he is looking into it..

55/22 To consider a request from Greenwatch to replace the dead tree in the Playing Field with a new one for the Jubilee. Cllr. Hambling explained that this is to the right of the playing field gate. It was asked that the dead tree be cut up and left to become a 'bug hotel.' There was a brief discussion and in theory the Parish Council is happy for the tree to be replaced and the one at Plaistow Green but wish to know who was going to pay for it. County Cllr. Siddall suggested applying for funding from his Locality Grant. **Action:** Clerk to obtain a quote for two native trees for a local supplier.

56/22 Conservation: Item 1: To consider applying for funding for ponds. Cllr. Butler is the Chair for the Farming and Wildlife Group (FWAG) who are behind this project. This is already being conducted in the parish **Item 2: To consider the**

request from BDC to provide locations for land they maintain to be rewilded. It was decided not to take part in this.

57/22 Annual Parish Meeting: Item 1: Update on guest speaker. The Clerk confirmed that the new BDC Chairman Cllr Andrew Hensman would be speaking.

Item 2: Update on refreshments. The Clerk confirmed that the buffet is on order from a local supplier.

58/22 Councillors Emails. Update: That all councillors have access to their new emails. The Chairman Cllr. Foster informed councillors that at the end of May the Clerk will no longer be sending emails to private addresses. Cllr. Pleasance is happy to assist in setting up the accounts. Cllr. Mason reported that he was able to access his councillor email inbox. **Action:** Councillors.

59/22 To receive reports from outside bodies, training courses, Village Representatives, Parish Council Committees and Advisory Groups. Cllr. Hambling reported on Greenwatch and the Jubilee Celebrations in the village. He is attending a meeting of the Braintree Association of Local Councils (BALC) on 18th May 2022. Meeting on 6th July 2022 for EC2H cycle route. Cllr Hambling has emailed Cllr. Butler regarding cycle routes over land owned by the Butler Trust. Bluebridge is the obstacle as the former railway line is owned by 2 different people.

60/22 To note any items of correspondence. Email regarding looking out for Turtle Doves in the area. Email regarding Loneliness Awareness Week.

61/22 Future agenda items. Fence and small gate for the Playing Field, Oswicks - valuation of hall, Quiet Lanes – Russells Road, picture frame for map, quote for native trees, wild camping site - Stisted Road

There being no further business the meeting closed at 9.06pm.

Next meeting Wednesday 27th July 2022. 7.15 Village Hall.

Signed.....

Chairman – Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council.

Date.....

Amanda Degan

<p>Amanda Degan – Clerk to the Parish Council, C/O Greenstead Green Post Office, Greenstead Green Farm, Greenstead Green, CO9 1QY. 01787 274992. greensteadgreenclerk@outlook.com. WWW. greensteadgreenpc.org.uk</p>
