

Minutes of the Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 15th January 2025 at 7.15pm in Greenstead Green Village Hall.

These are draft minutes and yet to be agreed by the Parish Council.

Present.

Cllr. Paul Foster. Chairman.

Cllr. Derek Hambling

Cllr. Ian Pleasance

Cllr. Derek Mason. Vice-Chairman.

Cllr. Jeremy Siggers

Cllr. Gemma Todd.

Amanda Degnan – Clerk to the Parish Council.

3 Members of the public

1/25 Apologies for absence. Apologies for absence were received and noted from District Cllr. Peter Schwier who was attending Braintree District Council (BDC) meetings.

2/25 Declarations of interest. To declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct. None were declared.

3/25 Minutes: Item 1: To approve the minutes of the November ordinary meeting. Councillor Foster proposed the motion, which was seconded by Councillor Mason. The minutes of the November ordinary meeting were formally approved.

Item 2: To approve the minutes from the Finance and Planning meeting held in December. Councillor Foster proposed the motion, which was seconded by Councillor Mason. The minutes of the Finance and Planning meeting were formally approved.

Item 3: Matters arising from the November minutes that are not on the agenda.

Item 115/24 County Councillors Report: Cllr. Butler to send details regarding 1m setback ruling regarding verges and not being covered by insurance to cut the first 1m of them to the Clerk who will send it on to County Cllr. Siddall. The Clerk had received no information from Cllr. Butler regarding this. **Item 120/24 Highways: Item 1 Parish Councillors Highway Issues. Cllr. Hambling to report FP 36 bridge was dangerous to Essex County Council (ECC) Highways.** Cllr. Hambling updated the meeting on this matter. The footpath was now closed until further notice. He had met the officer responsible for footpaths who had explained that due to the 8m span of the bridge it cannot be repaired until August when the land is dry enough to allow vehicles to reach the site with the replacement bridge. Ongoing. Cllr. Hambling had also spoken to Highways about the noisy drain cover in Stisted Road

and this was on their list to be repaired. **Kerbing in White Ash Green:** Cllr. Pleasance reported that as requested at the November meeting he had sent an email regarding kerbing with photos to County Cllr. Siddall and had copied the rest of the parish council in as well. No one in the Parish Council had received this email and it was assumed neither had Cllr. Siddall. Cllr. Pleasance to resend the email.

124/24 Neighbourhood Plan: To consider entering a response regarding Finchington and Wethersfield Joint Neighbourhood Plan -Regulation 14 Pre-Plan Submission and Public Consultation. A response had been sent. **133/24 Reports: Invite PCSO to a Parish Council meeting.** To be discussed at the March meeting. Cllr. Pleasance to become the Police Representative at the recently announced Parish Police meetings. **Action:** Clerk to contact Pc Draper regarding the new meetings.

4/25 County Councillor's report. Due to the absence of County Councillor Siddall, no report was presented.

5/25 District Councillor's report. Due to the absence of District Councillor Schwier, no report was presented.

6/25 Precept/Budget 2025/2026: Item 1. To agree and set the budget. At the Finance and Planning meeting held in December it had been decided to raise the budget by £200 from £13,540 to £13,740. The Chairman, Cllr. Foster proposed accepting and setting the budget at £13,740, Seconded Cllr. Mason . All approved.

Item 2. To agree and set the Precept. The precept is to be set at £13,740 an increase of £200 which will result in a Band D property paying £49.27 for 2025/26 council tax year. Last year it was £48.57. This is an increase of 1.44% or £0.70.

Proposal: To agree to set the Precept at £13,740. Proposed: Cllr. Foster, Seconded: Cllr. Mason. All approved.

Item 3. Chairman to sign the Precept. The Chairman, Cllr. Foster and Clerk signed the Precept request. **Action:** Clerk to send to BDC.

7/25 Finance: To agree the accounts for payment. These were circulated prior to the meeting. Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Todd. All agreed. The accounts for payment were duly approved.

Method	Payee	Amount	Reason
SO	Mrs A J Degnan	£362.00	December Salary pd 15/12/24
SO	Mrs A J Degnan	£362.00	January Salary pd 15/01/25
BACS	Village Hall	£20.00	hall rental
BACS	Mrs A J Degnan	£13.50	expenses
Card	Ionos	£6.00	website 17/11/24
Card	Three	£20.00	Phone top-up 21/11/24
Card	Ionos	£6.00	website 17/12/24
BACS	EALC	£96.00	Footpath course 13/11/24

Card	Sainsburys	£19.00	gift
BACS	FreshairFitness	£5,940.00	1st instalment for gym
	Total payments for January 2025	£6,844.50	

The Chairman had been approached at a recent meeting by both County Cllr. Siddall and District Cllr. Schwier regarding grants of up to £3000 they had available for Parish Councils and organisations in their district. It was noted that Cllr. Schwier's grant of £1500 needs to be applied for before the end of January. It was suggested that the grants could be used for the shed or to improve the village hall. It was proposed by the Chairman to write to the Village Hall Management Committee and ask if they would like to improve the insulation and heating in the hall with a grant applied for by the Parish Council on their behalf. **Action:** Clerk and Cllr. Foster.

8/25 Planning and Braintree District Council (BDC) Planning applications..

Item 1: Planning Applications: Any Planning Applications received after the agenda was published. At the Chairmans discretion. No Planning Applications had been received.

Item 2: Update on previous Planning applications. For information only. The Parish Council had objected to the recent Bournebridge Hill reserved matters application on the grounds of lack of community consultation, light pollution, and landscaping. There had been 3 applications that were for information only: Bluebridge Farm – converting a barn into a 5-bed house. This was pending. Moat Farm – converting a barn into a 3-bed house. This was pending. Halstead Hall – a minor change of conditions.

Item 3. Greenstead Hall: Update on recent enquiry regarding building work at the Hall. Clerk. The Clerk had written to BDC Planning Enforcement, and they confirmed that they were investigating the matter.

Item 4: Update on the recent Planning Members Forum attended by Cllr. Foster. Cllr. Foster. Councillor Foster attended the Planning Members Forum on Tuesday, 14th January 2025. During this forum, Hopkins Homes, the purchaser of the Bournebridge Hill site, presented their plans to develop 197 homes. Councillor Foster expressed concerns regarding the insufficient public consultation by Hopkins Homes. He also highlighted the absence of a clearly defined boundary for the development and was reassured to learn that BDC is hiring an independent consultant to review the landscape. Furthermore, he addressed the issue of lighting on the new road, which meets highway standards but results in light pollution. Hopkins Homes committed to investigating this matter further.

9/25 Playing Field: Item 1: Update on playing field. Cllr. Mason is conducting the weekly inspections. He is still waiting for an invoice from the welder. He will replace the broken latch on the gate.

Item 2: To agree to authorise the landscaping and reseeding of the additional 4-5m of land in the Playing Field at a cost of £1200-1500. Proposal: To authorise

Cllr. Mason to obtain 3 quotes for the landscaping and reseeding of the additional 4-5m of land in the Playing Field. Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Todd. All agreed.

Item 3: Update on approaching Playsafety (RoSPA) to carry out Operations Inspections. Clerk. The clerk had contacted Playsafety with regards to this matter. They had provided the following quote:

- May/June – Reduced Rate - £80.00 to inspect up to five items of play equipment on the play area. There is an extra fee of £4.00 plus VAT to inspect each play item over five.
- August - £265 plus VAT and then £120 plus VAT per subsequent area.
- November - £265 plus VAT and then £120 plus VAT per subsequent area.
- February - £265 plus VAT and then £120 plus VAT per subsequent area.

Alternatively, they offered a 2-day training course at a cost of £580 plus VAT to become a qualified Operations Inspector.

It was unanimously agreed not to pursue this course of action. Cllr. Mason offered to contact the company who had trained him at EALC in Dunmow and ask for a quote from them to conduct Operations Inspections. The Councillors agreed to this.

Action: Cllr. Mason.

Item 4: To consider purchasing new benches for the Playing Field. This is in addition to what is already in the Playing Field. It was agreed to purchase a new bench and apply for a grant from District Cllr. Schwier. Cllr. Mason to organise the new bench. **Action:** Cllr. Mason. Clerk to apply for the grant.

10/25 Enover: Item 1: To agree to accept the terms of the agreement from Enover. Councillor Foster proposed the motion, which was seconded by Councillor Mason. The motion to agree to accept the terms of the agreement from Enover were formally approved by the Councillors.

Item 2: To confirm that Cllr. Foster and Cllr. Mason are signatories to the agreement. Councillor Foster proposed the motion, which was seconded by Councillor Mason. The motion to confirm that Cllr. Foster and Cllr. Mason are signatories to the agreement from Enover were formally approved by the Councillors.

Item 3: Cllr. Foster and Cllr. Mason to sign the agreement. The Chairman, Cllr. Foster and Vice-Chairman Cllr. Mason signed the agreement from Enover. Clerk to send to Enover. **Action:** Clerk.

11/25 Highways: Item1: Parish Councillors Highway issues. White Ash Green - Cllr. Pleasance asked if a letter could be written to ECC Highways requesting that the speed limit on the road between High Garrett and Halstead (A131) be reduced from 60mph to 40 or 30mph. he would also like to see 'Accident Black Spot' signs installed, and road markings repainted. This is a dangerous road as evidenced by the death of a 19-year-old man before Christmas along with other accidents over the last month. Cllr. Siggers explained that if a death has occurred you can ask for a review of the road. Cllr. Pleasance was asked to draft a letter to County Cllr. Siddall,

who is head of the Local Highways Panel (LHP), requesting changes to the speed limit and signage along the A131 and expressing the Parish Councils concerns about the A131. **Action:** Cllr. Pleasance.

Item 2: Update on approaching ECC Highways and request that Burtons Green Road be considered for 'Quiet Lane' status. Cllr. Todd. Cllr. Todd had received an email from County Cllr. Siddall on the 9th December 2024 updating her on this matter. He will be submitting her application at the next LHP in the new year. But he cautioned that it would take time to progress through the stages and may not happen.

12/25 Storage shed: Item 1: To approve the purchase of a new shipping container for storage at an approximate cost of £2550 not including VAT and approve cost of installation. Item 2: To confirm that the storage unit will be sited on Cllr. Butler's land. Cllr. Hambling. This is no longer required.

13/25 To update the Potential Open Spaces Improvement (POSI) plan. To confirm route of railway and cycle path along it. Cllr. Hambling and Butler. Cllr. Butler had been told about the route, but it was 2 years ago. Everything is currently on hold at the moment as Greenways is concentrating on the Marks Hall cycle path. Cllr. Hambling is attending a Greenways meeting soon and will ask the Chair of Greenways to contact Cllr. Butler. Cllr. Hambling will email the Clerk with any added information, and it was noted that a new representative for Greenways is required.

14/25 Truecam: To consider writing to District Cllr. Tom Cunningham and ask for an update on the Truecam rollout. Councillor Foster proposed the motion, which was seconded by Councillor Mason. The Councillors were all in favour and the motion was duly carried. The Clerk was instructed to write a letter to District Cllr. Cunningham. **Action:** Clerk.

15/25 Penny Pots: BT phonebox update. Cllr. Mason confirmed that a lock could be fitted to the phonebox. It was decided to monitor the situation.

16/25 Braintree District Council Waste Review Consultation – Item 1: To consider participating in the recently announced Waste Review Consultation. Clerk to circulate an email to the Councillors asking for their views on this and to then put in a formal response to the consultation. It was noted that Cllr. Todd had already responded to the consultation as an individual. **Action:** Clerk.

Item 2: To encourage residents to participate in this recently announced consultation. Residents were encouraged to participate in the consultation. Deadline for responses to the consultation is 2nd March 2025.

17/25 Parish Map: To agree to approach the Village Hall Management Committee and ask permission to hang up the map of the Parish in the hall. Councillor Mason proposed the motion, which was seconded by Councillor Pleasance. The Councillors were all in favour and the motion was duly carried. The Clerk was instructed to write a letter to the Village Hall Management Committee. **Action:** Clerk.

18/25 Resignation: Item 1. To receive and accept the resignation of Cllr. Derek Hambling. A letter of resignation from Councillor Hambling was received and accepted by the Parish Council due to his impending move from the village.

Item 2: Vote of thanks to Cllr. Hambling. Chairman. The Chairman, Cllr. Foster thanked Cllr. Hambling for all his work in the village, on the Parish Council, Greenwatch and Greenways . He would be missed. A gift of red wine was presented to him.

19/25 Casual Vacancy: Item 1: To declare a vacancy on the Parish Council in the Greenstead Green Ward. The vacancy was declared in the Greenstead Green Ward. **Item 2: To agree to the Clerk approaching Governance at Braintree District Council to start the process of advertising a Casual Vacancy.** Councillor Mason proposed the motion, which was seconded by Councillor Pleasance. The Councillors were all in favour and the motion was duly carried. The Clerk was instructed to contact Governance at BDC.. **Action:** Clerk.

20/25 Public comment. Residents expressed their thanks to Cllr. Hambling for all his work in the community and on the Parish Council.

21/25 To receive reports from outside bodies, training courses, Village Representatives. Update on Footpath course. Cllr. Todd Cllr. Todd had found the footpath course interesting and encouraged others to attend it.

22/25 Future agenda items. PCSO, .gov.uk email and website, items from this meeting.

There being no further items to discuss. The meeting closed at 8.50pm

Next Parish Council Meeting. 12th March 2025. 7.15 pm Village Hall.

Signed.....

Chairman – Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council.

Date.....

Amanda Degnan

<p>Amanda Degnan – Clerk to the Parish Council, C/O Greenstead Green Post Office, Greenstead Green Farm, Greenstead Green, CO9 1QY. 07782209224 . parishclerk@greensteadgreenpc.org.uk. WWW. greensteadgreenpc.org.uk</p>
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