

# GESTINGTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

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## Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup>. January 2023 at 7pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllrs D. Smith (Chairman), P. Bagby, S. Bolter, G. Carey, P. Collett, A. Cooper, ECC Cllr P. Schwier, Mr. Leslie Crumpton-Taylor (Internal Auditor) and Kevin B. Money (Parish Clerk).

There were no members of the public present.

**001/2023 Chairman welcome.** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished all a Happy New Year.

**002/2023 Apologies for Absence** were received from BDC Cllr W. Scattergood and Cllr C. Craig,

### **003/2023 Declaration of Interest**

To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary, Pecuniary or non-Pecuniary Interest relating to items on the agenda Cllr A. Cooper declared an interest in the Cricket Club

### **004/2023 To approve the Minutes of the last meeting of Gestingthorpe Parish Council**

To receive and agree the minutes of the GPC meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup>. November 2022. **All Agreed**

### **005/2023 Chairman's report and any update since last meeting**

Best wishes for a peaceful and healthy New Year.

As we enter the New Year, sadly we are seeing rising cases of Covid and Flu and we all still need to be careful.

Looking back over 2022, as Covid restrictions eased `normality` returned and in June we were able to celebrate the Queens Platinum Jubilee with a weekend of events on the Playing Field, the highlight of which was the lighting of our Beacon on Church Green.

Sadly, the Queen passed away in September. Looking ahead we have the Coronation of King Charles in May. Could this be an opportunity to light the Village Beacon.

Keep fit sessions have continued on the Playing Field and in addition to summer cricket matches, we have the return of Sunday football. It's extremely pleasing to see the children's Play Equipment being used and the Playing Field being used all year round.

I would like to thank Ashley for cutting the hedge along Sudbury Road and for bringing up the pallet of salt to Church Green for residents to use during the recent spell of bad weather.

### **006/2023 Public Participation Session**

No questions from the public

### **007/2023 Essex County Councillor report – ECC Cllr Peter Schwier**

Council Tax is being raised by 3.5% to be ratified at Full Council meeting in February

The Council looked at raising it by 5% but to reduce it due to only placing 2% increase on Social Care

Inflation pressure is immense and the service costs are to be reduced

Cllr D. Smith asked if Highway maintenance is being increased? Cllr P. Schwier said that with new technology and new materials being trialled it will help reduce ECC Highways costs. With resources (what three words) now they are being made more efficiently.

Cllr P. Schwier left the meeting

### **008/2023 District Councillor report – BDC Cllr Wendy Scattergood**

No report was given

### **009/2023 Planning Applications**

**22/03214/VAR** - Parkgate Farm Delvyns Lane Gestingthorpe Essex CO9 3AE

Variation of Condition 2 (Approved Plans) of approved application 22/00194/LBC granted 12.07.2022 for:

Conversion and extension of former stables/granary building to holiday letting accommodation.

Response sent to BDC before the 29<sup>th</sup>. December 2022 deadline

**GPC has no objection to this planning application**

**010/2023 Planning Appeal/s.** No appeals have been made affecting Gestingthorpe

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup>. January 2023 at 7pm in the Village Hall

**011/2023 Decision/s made by BDC on planning applications****22/02955/T56** - Land Adjacent To Delvyns Lane Gestingthorpe

The installation of a 25m Lattice mast complete with 6 antennas, 2 300mm dishes and 1 GPS module, 3 radio equipment cabinets, a meter cabinet within a fenced compound and ancillary development works thereto.

**Prior Approval Required and Not Given by BDC**

**Outstanding planning applications**

**22/00722/HH** - 23 Oates Cottages Sudbury Road Gestingthorpe Essex CO9 3BG

Retention of garden shed **Status Still Decision pending**

**012/2023 Representative reports**

- Highways – Cllr P. Collett

**SID Sudbury Road** - The unit has been removed from the post and I understand that it is currently undergoing repairs by ECC. I am pressing ECC for its return.

**Community Speed Watch** - Terry Straight has agreed to take over the role of co-ordinator of the Gestingthorpe Community Speed Watch. Cllr P. Collett to invite Terry Straight to the next GPC meeting.

- Transport (Special Projects) – Cllr S. Bolter

**TRANSPORT EAST and its Rural Mobility Survey.**

Transport East is one of seven Sub-National Transport Bodies in England. It is working to deliver a collective vision for the future of transport in Essex, Norfolk, Suffolk, Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock. It brings together the local transport and planning authorities, and business leaders with Network Rail and National Highways, to enable the region to speak with one voice on the transport investment needed.

It decided to run its Rural Mobility Survey (TERMS) from the 7<sup>th</sup> November to the 16<sup>th</sup> of December. Essex Association of Local Councils did not inform the Clerks about it until mid-day on the 8<sup>th</sup> of November. The Clerk promptly forwarded it to me. The form was unstable. Several answers vanished. Jo Hazell-Edwards of TE confirmed the answers had not gone to them. She sent an improved form, just in time for me to fill it in and send to Cllrs in the early hours of the 10<sup>th</sup>. of November. No Councillors made any formal comments on it during that meeting.

a) **The F315 bus.**

I have not yet had time to explore to explore the possibility, mentioned at last month's meeting, of using funding for youth projects to improve access to public transport for youth (and other community members). The situation remains almost unchanged.

The information on the service, both direct to the public and to IT providers, is so poor that many who try the service miss the bus never try it again, and many others dare not try the service for fear of becoming stranded or because they have been falsely told they have to book the day before. Despite the case having been made by ECC Cllr Schwier to the Chair of ECC transport committee, ECC officers are still not addressing our concerns or contacting me directly. When "Integrated Passenger Transport Unit | Essex County Council" sought "support to engage bus users in a Co-Design process to support the development of a new Transport Information Website for Essex" on Thurs 24<sup>th</sup> of November, it sent the invitation to the Clerk on the afternoon or the 23<sup>rd</sup> of November. He forwarded on the 24<sup>th</sup>. It was not marked urgent. I was still dealing with e-mails that were, when I had to go to Marks Tay by train to collect my car. When I went back to my desk, I found it was an invitation to a 2-option event, either one that had already finished or one that was already  $\frac{3}{4}$  over. The debate was the very one which would be most useful to us. I complained about the lack of decent notice to Peter Schwier. He responded on Fri the 25<sup>th</sup>, with an apology and an invitation to one on Tues 29<sup>th</sup>. This one was specially concentrating on Car Commuters. I attended. There were few car commuters there, so I was able to put many of my points about earliest departure timetables, publicising flexible services and providing better connections, while admitting that our 2 hourly service connecting to hourly trains is not designed for commuters. There has been no feedback yet. Unless we could become a pilot, I doubt if the Transport Information Website will arrive in time to Save Our Service.

- Playing Field/Pavilion – Cllr D. Smith

Cllr D. Smith explained that the recreation ground is the biggest expense to the Council.

The pavilion repairs are to go ahead as planned.

Rental from the Cricket Club and Football Club. An additional business of keep fit club is being run on the field.

Cllr D. Smith suggested that the keep fit organiser gives a donation/fee to the Parish Council.

Cllr D. Smith to purchase the materials to repair the pavilion

- Playing Field – Cllr A. Cooper

Cllr P. Collett informed the meeting that the play equipment still has minor items identified by the ROSPA report remain to be addressed

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup>. January 2023 at 7pm in the Village Hall**

Cllr A. Cooper informed the meeting that there have been several issues with the Pavilion. Chris Moulton discovered a water leak following the cold snap of mid-December. He immediately turned off the water and reported it to me. I arranged to visit with David Smith, and then contacted Andrew Tarbin to effect a repair. Andrew undertook the work but was unable to gain access to one door. Richard Scillitoe was contacted to repair the broken lock.

Calling in at the Football Match on Sunday, I was told that there was a problem with one of the showers, (which Andrew hadn't been able to check due to the problem with locks), so have contacted him again. Andrew has also suggested that the pipe work could be reorganised and better lagging installed and will provide a quote for doing this work.

Great enthusiasm was manifest by all of the footballers - which was great to see. Especial thanks should be given to Peter Nice for marking the pitch out.

I walked round the Playing Field again yesterday. The usual concerns re. ingress of branches on the eastern and southern side remains. Happily, Lauren's tree appears to be thriving.

The short fence from the Bus Shelter towards the Church, (opposite Foundry House), will need bolstering up at some point.

- Recreation Ground – Cllr P. Collett
  - a) Pavilion report

A water leak occurred within the roof space causing damage. Cllr D. Smith spoke to the Football Club about turning off the electricity and water supply after each match.

- b) Trees report

Cllr D. Smith sent a letter to Michael Sharp and he said that the trees need to be tested. M. Sharp will pay to have them tested. The trees may need to be removed.

The Clerk to contact Essex Highways and UK Power Network to report this tree problem at the crossroads junction of North End Road with Nether Hill (Pound Farm) which are leaning and overhanging the Highway

- Footpath – Cllr P. Bagby

No defects have been reported since the last meeting. I have contacted Essex Highways regarding our participation in the Parish Paths Partnership (P3) scheme and waiting on a response.

- Village Hall – Cllr P. Bagby

The Village Hall has had a very active Christmas period. The Children's Christmas party was held at the beginning of December and was attended by 16 children plus parents. We were lucky to receive a visit from Santa who handed out gifts to the children and the organisers. Nic Smith kept the children entertained with games and dancing. A big thank you to all who helped out particularly Gilly, Lauren & Nic. Feedback on the day and afterwards was very positive and we hope to make this party a regular event on the Village Hall calendar. The Adults' party was held the following Friday. The VH supplied a light supper and ran a cash bar. Games & dancing added to the fun. Although not put on as a fund raiser, we still raised over £200 for Village Hall funds. Nic Smith & Kate Abbott also ran a joint Christmas Fitness & Pilates session with a bit of dance & mince pies thrown in for good measure. Events planned so far for 2023: a Saturday Coffee morning & Book Sale on 28 January as part of Village Halls Week, A 'Detectorists' talk on Tuesday 7 Feb and a quiz night in March. The committee is also considering how we can further improve the warmth & comfort of the hall and reduce condensation. This will be discussed at the next committee meeting on 9 February.

### 013/2023 Finance

- a) To receive the Bank reconciliations as at 31<sup>st</sup>. December 2022

Councillors noted the Bank reconciliations as at 31<sup>st</sup>. December 2022

- b) To receive the comparison of Actual to Budget for 2022/23

Councillors noted the comparison of Actual to Budget for 2022/23

c) To approve the payment of Accounts for December 2022 and January 2023 and to agree a transfer of funds to meet the Parish Councils financial requirements. **All Agreed**

### 014/2023 Budget for 2023-2024

- Councillors to discuss and finalise the budget for 2023-2024

Cllr D. Smith proposed the budget for 2023-2024 at £12049. Cllr P. Bagby seconded. **All Agreed**

### 015/2023 Precept 2023-2024

- 1) Councillors to discuss and finalise the Precept for 2023-2024

Councillors finalised the 2023-2024 Precept of £10304 which using the BDC Tax Base figure of 175.72 resulted in a Band D property cost of £58.64p

Cllr D. Smith proposed the Precept for 2023-2024 at £10304. Cllr P. Bagby seconded. **All Agreed**

- 2) Councillors to authorise the RFO to submit the Precept demand form to BDC deadline. **All Agreed**

**Date of next meeting is to be held in the Village Hall on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup>. March 2023 at 7pm**

**Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup>. January 2023 at 7pm in the Village Hall**

**016/2023 Councillors to note 2023 meeting dates**

**11.05.23 AVM / GPC AGM / GPC Full Council: 13.07.23: 14.09.23: 09.11.23**

**017/2023 Items for Next Agenda**

Keep fit organiser donation/fee

King's Coronation

Notification to residents when agricultural spraying takes place

**018/2023 Closure of the Meeting**

To close the Meeting having considered and determined all items of business.

The Chairman then closed the meeting at 8.45pm and thanked everyone for attending

Signed

*D Smith*

9<sup>th</sup>. March 2023

**D. Smith  
Chairman**