

# GESTINGTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk / RFO: Kevin B. Money  
 7 Roach Vale, Colchester, Essex. CO4 3YN  
 Tel: 07810781509 – Email: gestingthorpepc@gmail.com  
 Website: <https://www.gestingthorpepc.co.uk>



## Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup>. November 2022 at 7pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllrs D. Smith (Chairman), C. Craig (Vice-Chairman), P. Bagby, S. Bolter, G. Carey, P. Collett, A. Cooper, ECC Cllr P. Schwier, BDC Cllr W. Scattergood, Mr. Leslie Crumpton-Taylor (Internal Auditor) and Kevin B. Money (Parish Clerk). There were no members of the public present.

**089/2022 Chairman welcome.** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting

**090/2022 Apologies for Absence** No apologies of absence were received

### **091/2022 Declaration of Interest**

To declare any Disclosable Pecuniary, Pecuniary or non-Pecuniary Interest relating to items on the agenda

Cllr P. Bagby declared an interest in 095/2022 (Village Hall Grant)

Cllr C. Craig declared an interest in item 098/2022 planning application 22/02955/T56

Cllr A. Cooper declared an interest in any item relating to the cricket club

### **092/2022 To approve the Minutes of the last meeting of Gestingthorpe Parish Council**

To receive and agree the minutes of the GPC meeting held on 29<sup>th</sup>. September 2022. **All Agreed**

### **093/2022 Chairman's report and any update since last meeting**

The Chairman supplied a report prior to the meeting. It read

Now the clocks have gone back and the evenings draw in, the wind and rain have returned.

It's extremely pleasing to see the return of football being played on the Playing Field and let's hope Heddingham United have a good season and re-brand as Gestingthorpe next year.

Following completion of roofing works to the Village Hall it's good to see the Hall being used again. Thanks to Chris Harman and the Village Hall Management Committee for all their hard work to ensure that the Village has an excellent Village Hall as the focal point for Village events.

### **094/2022 Public Participation Session**

No question from the public

### **095/2022 Grant Application/s received by the Parish Clerk**

a) Oates Gestingthorpe Churchyard Charity

Cllr A. Cooper proposed giving a donation of £175.00p to the Oates Gestingthorpe Churchyard Charity.

Cllr G. Carey seconded. **All Agreed**

b) Essex & Herts Air Ambulance

Cllr A. Cooper proposed giving a donation of £175.00p to the Essex & Herts Air Ambulance. Cllr G. Carey seconded. **All Agreed**

c) Village Hall Management Committee

Cllr A. Cooper proposed giving a donation of £175.00p to the Village Hall management committee.

Cllr G. Carey seconded. **All Agreed**

### **096/2022 Essex County Councillor report – ECC Cllr Peter Schwier**

- Budget – open consultation – control cost due to escalating social care costs
- Discounted broadband
- 2 pilot retro-fit scheme
- Free school meals over half-term. Hopefully ongoing
- Winter warmth fund
- Explorer magazine
- Locality funding is still available (£2000). The Clerk to obtain estimate on the Pavilion repairs.
- Demand on social care is still putting pressure on ECC Budget

ECC Cllr P. Schwier left the meeting

### **097/2022 District Councillor report – BDC Cllr Wendy Scattergood**

- 2023-2024 Budget is ongoing but is thought to be around 2.6%
- Social care is draining on BDC budgets
- Tax base figure for Parish Council's will be out in December

Minutes of the Parish Council Full Council meeting held on Thursday 10<sup>th</sup>. November 2022

- Investing in properties has proved fruitful
- Reserves have not been touched in 2023
- £1m is being set aside for people in case of need

## 098/2022 Planning Applications

### 22/02955/T56 - Land Adjacent To Delvyns Lane Gestingthorpe Essex

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. The Clerk read out a statement supplied by the landowner (Mark and Steph Prior) regarding the proposed mast along Delvyns Lane. It read

*We understand the need for better mobile phone communications in the village and the drive to have smart meters installed in houses.*

*We are of the opinion that the site chosen is unsuitable. We will be lodging an objection with BDC due to the detrimental impact the mast will have on the view of the beautiful countryside from Audley End towards the Leys wood.*

*However, what we really do not want is another 5 years of worry, cost and aggravation only for a mast to be imposed on us and erected in Hall Farmyard*

Councillors then discussed the planning application and it was agreed to submit the following response to BDC

#### **RESOLVED:**

Gestingthorpe Parish Council have given very careful consideration to all the information submitted as part of this planning application, along with the thoughts from Parishioners on social media.

The Parish Council accepts that there is a need within the Village for improved 3G & 4G coverage and the principle of improving the service is welcomed.

However, as a body the Parish Council cannot support the current application.

We are of the opinion that the application does not conform to the Code of Practice for Wireless Network Development in England published by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport on the following grounds:-

- There has not been any positive engagement with the Parish/Village with a view to trying to identify a site that would be acceptable, both from a visual and technical perspective.
- The application is badly flawed and the supporting statements are simply generic and do not relate to the application site. It states that the mast blends with the street scene! This is clearly not the case, Delvyns Lane is an attractive unmade "Byway", situated in unspoilt open countryside of high landscape value and is well used by recreational walkers. The proposed mast will be significantly higher than anything else around it and no attempt has been made to provide any screening.
- From the Delvyns Lane junction with Church Street up to the application site there is a row of oak trees which the Parish planted to celebrate the centenary of Captain Lawrence Oates' death. They will form an impressive tree lined avenue along Delvyns Lane and provide a fitting memorial to the heroic Captain Oates. We do not wish to see them overshadowed by a mast, or damaged during construction works.
- The application is not supported by any ecological surveys of the site or the surrounding area. Surely, this must be a requirement for an application of this nature. Are there any reptiles, endangered/protected species or protected flora/fauna on the site or in the immediate vicinity?
- There are Heritage Assets (Listed Buildings) within 300m of the proposed site and these are the properties that will be the most adversely affected by the proposal.
- We also fail to understand why the proposed mast needs to be 25m high bearing in mind that the previous application, which was subsequently refused, at Hall Farm was for a 18m mast. The current proposed site is some 10/12m higher than the previous Farmyard site.
- Questions have also been asked as to why the proposed mast will not provide 5G coverage – will it be obsolete in a short period of time without this provision?

We suggest that the way forward would be for the applicants to withdraw the current application and actively engage with the Parish in accordance with the Code of Practice with a view to trying to find a suitable site.

If they are not prepared to engage, then we respectfully request that the application be refused.

However, should you be mindful to grant planning permission, then we respectfully request that any approval is subject to Conditions requiring full ecological surveys, flora/fauna surveys, tree survey, landscape report and a tree planting scheme.

## 099/2022 Planning Appeal/s

TOWN AND COUNTRY PLANNING ACT 1990 APPEAL UNDER SECTION 78

Site Address: The Pheasant PH Audley End Gestingthorpe Essex CO9 3AU

Description of Development: Addition of sheltered outdoor-seating area adjoining existing pub building.

Planning Application Ref: 22/00356/FUL Appellant's Name: Diana Donoghue Planning Inspectorate Ref:

APP/Z1510/W/22/3301064 Appeal Start Date: 30 September 2022

An appeal has been made to the Secretary of State following Braintree District Council's refusal of the above application/s. The appeal will be determined on the basis of written representations.

Councillors noted the planning appeal above

### **100/2022 Decision/s made by BDC on planning applications**

Councillors noted the planning decisions made by BDC affecting Gestingthorpe

**22/00972/HH** - Moat House Moat Street Gestingthorpe Essex CO9 3AT

Removal of existing caravan and replacement with grooms quarters. **Application WITHDRAWN 22.09.22**

**22/00971/HH** - Moat House Moat Street Gestingthorpe Essex CO9 3AT

Proposed stable block within the tennis court boundary and replacement of the existing barns and cartlodge doors. **Application GRANTED 04.10.22**

**22/00969/LBC** - Moat House Moat Street Gestingthorpe Essex CO9 3AT

Removal of existing modern timber doors on Barn 1, Barn 2 and cartlodge and replacement with traditional timber doors. Proposed stable block located on the existing tennis court. Removal of the existing caravan and replacement with grooms quarters. **Application GRANTED 04.10.22**

**22/01147/FUL** - Land Adjacent Butlers Wood and Waldergrave Wood West of A131 (In The Parishes Of Bulmer And Twinstead) Sudbury Road Bulmer Essex

A new 400/132 kilovolt (kV) Grid Supply Point (GSP) substation including two super grid transformers, associated buildings, equipment and switchgear, a single circuit cable sealing end compound, a new permanent vehicular access to the public highway, associated landscaping (including boundary fencing, an area for Biodiversity Net Gain, and landscape mounding) and drainage. **Application GRANTED 25.10.22**

**22/01971/HH** - Beverley House Audley End Gestingthorpe Essex CO9 3AU

Erection of first-floor and single-storey front extensions, and two storey and single-storey rear extensions. Conversion of garage to habitable accommodation. **Application GRANTED 10.10.22**

**22/02092/PLD** - By Blacksmiths Church Street Gestingthorpe Essex CO9 3AZ

Application for a Certificate of Lawfulness for a proposed development - Installation of solar panels to roof. **Application GRANTED 06.09.22**

### **Outstanding planning applications**

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

Retention of garden shed **Status Decision pending**

BDC Cllr W. Scattergood left the meeting

### **101/2022 Representative reports**

- Highways – Cllr P. Collett

Cllr P. Collett supplied a report prior to the meeting. It read

SID Audley End - The unit seems to operate satisfactorily.

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

- Community Speedwatch

Cllr P. Collett supplied a report prior to the meeting. It read

The Gestingthorpe Community Speed Watch Group successfully carried out its first two speed watches on 30th August and 21st September 2022. However, the October watch had to be cancelled due to illness etc.

I regret that due to other commitments I will be unable to continue as co-ordinator of the Gestingthorpe Speedwatch. To be effective the Speedwatch needs to take place regularly and often and I am afraid that I simply do not have the time to enable this to happen. If any existing volunteer or any other resident wishes to take over the role of co-ordinator, would they please contact me.

- Transport (Special Projects) – Cllr S. Bolter

Cllr S. Bolter supplied a report prior to the meeting. It read

No progress at all has been made since the last PC meeting.

At the Educational Foundation we were told of funding which could increase wellbeing in small rural communities. The elderly, the young, and many in between find the local ECC bus timetable so difficult to use they dare not use the bus, unnecessarily restricting their lives or making others to do double car journeys to take and collect them, when we should be saving energy by substituting the car with the bus when practical. The idea I have is to ask for funding to produce new earliest departure timetable, checked by the operator, laid out and printed as the detachable inside spread at the centre of the Parish News. Young people could help publicise the bus and the new timetable. Villagers young and old could compete for space for their

art on the reverse side, and/or colour advertising could be sold on part of it.

Highways Extra – I was told there was no chance of having anything spent on “Pot Hole Chase.” Well the two biggest pot holes were filled with bonded tarmac. Also the missing bend sign in Hedingham Road Gestingthorpe was replaced- but Highways did not cut back the hedge so that it could be seen!

- Broadband – Cllr S. Bolter

Cllr S. Bolter supplied a report prior to the meeting. It read

*Problem* As no new Broadband “Champion” has been appointed yet, I took up a problem about an abandoned installation that had been booked in advance with the original County Broadband (CBB) .

County Broadband Limited (CBL) put in wall box, conduit to the underground connection box just over 40m further down Moat Street and a hauling string. When CBL came back to install the fibre they could not pull it through. They first of all tried to charge the customer £ 3 000 to dig up the road, then they tried to get him to withdraw. Wisely he refused. I confirmed that CBL have to complete the work without any extra charge for the problems beyond his box. I explained he had to write to CBL to give permission to talk to them about his case. Neither he nor CBL have been back to me yet.

*New Rep* “Champion” is the term used by the Essex program. The CBL is not part of it. Its staff may not recognise the term. I suggest we appoint a “Gestingthorpe PC Broadband Rep”

Cllr A. Cooper expressed his appreciation in getting Broadband to the village. **All Agreed**

- Playing Field – Cllr A. Cooper

Play Equipment - Minor items identified by the ROSPA report remain to be addressed.

Cllr A. Cooper supplied a report prior to the meeting. It read

I visited the Playing Field last week and noted overhanging branches along the Southern (Church) side of the field, in addition to the Eastern (Pot Kiln Chase) side. Long-standing strimmer damage is apparent on the wooden posts around the swings. I wonder if any form of shield can be put around them?

The gutters on the pavilion needed cleaning out. One of the brackets which holds the gutters on the back of the pavilion needed re-fixing - as the gutter was sagging down with water overflowing onto the walls.

Without establishing any precedent, we were able to do both jobs this morning

- Recreation Ground – Cllr P. Collett
  - a) Pavilion report – No report was given
  - b) Trees report –Cllr D. Smith has written to Mr. Sharp to cut down a tree which is diseased

- Footpath – Cllr P. Bagby

Cllr P. Bagby supplied a report prior to the meeting. It read

The footbridge on Footpath 8 has been replaced by Essex Highways. The new bridge is 2 metres longer than the old bridge, is of very sturdy construction and has a safe handrail. No other reports have been received

- Village Hall – Cllr P. Bagby

Cllr P. Bagby supplied a report prior to the meeting. It read

The work on the village hall roof has been completed and all the scaffolding removed. The final bill was £36,355.20 of which £25,000 was paid from provisioned funds, £3,562.50 from donations and Gift Aid and £7,792.70 from the Village Hall bank account. The Village Hall committee thanks everyone who has generously donated to help fund the unexpected shortfall as well as everyone who regularly attend functions and supports the village hall in its fundraising activities.

The next fundraiser is on 30<sup>th</sup>. September and is a ‘Raise the Roof’ party to celebrate the new roof. Interest in the event has been good with a few villagers buying tickets for a VH event for the first time. There are still tickets available so please spread the word to your friends and neighbours and see me to buy tickets if you’ve not already done so. The funds raised will be used to build up funds again in the account to ensure running costs can be met and allow us to continue to improve the facilities of the hall.

The coffee mornings continue fortnightly on Fridays and are well supported, and we now have some regulars making good use of the book exchange. A craft fayre on 29<sup>th</sup>. October is being organised by Helen Skerratt. This will be run in conjunction with one of our quarterly Saturday Coffee mornings. Christmas parties for both children and adults are planned for December and hopefully we can squeeze in another event in November, suggestions include a Race night, Curry Supper or Quiz night

Finally, we will start work again on the outside space hoping for some rain to allow us to do some autumn planting. Steve Bagby has made some new planters to replace the old ones at the front of the building however these won’t go out until they can be filled up and planted so that they are too heavy to move.

The next committee meeting is 15<sup>th</sup>. September.

**102/2022 Finance**

- a) To receive the Bank reconciliations as at 31<sup>st</sup>. October 2022  
Councillors noted the Bank reconciliations as at 31<sup>st</sup>. October 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) Cllr D. Smith proposed and Cllr G. Carey to pay £30 to the RBL for the poppy wreath. **All Agreed**
- d) To approve the payment of Accounts for October and November 2022 and to agree a transfer of funds to meet the Parish Councils financial requirements. **All Agreed**
- e) To confirm Internet Banking signatories. The RFO informed the meeting that Cllr D. Smith and Cllr C. Craig have been added to the Internet Banking signatory list.

**103/2022 2023/2024 Budget**

Councillors to discuss the Council's anticipated expenditure for 2023/2024.  
The Councillors confirmed the 2023/2024 budget expenditure. This produced a Budget figure of £11979.00p which represents a Precept of £10234. An increase of £566  
Cllr D. Smith proposed and Cllr C. Craig seconded to authorise the RFO to submit the Precept demand form to BDC when requested. **All Agreed**

**Date of next meeting is to be held in the Village Hall on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup>. January 2023 at 7pm**

**104/2022 Councillors to note 2023 meeting dates**

**12.01.23: 09.03.23: 11.05.23 AVM / GPC AGM / GPC Full Council: 13.07.23: 14.09.23: 09.11.23**

**105/2022 Items for Next Agenda****106/2022 Closure of the Meeting**

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

The Chairman then closed the meeting at 8.50pm and thanked everyone for attending

Signed

*D Smith*

12<sup>th</sup>. January 2023

**D. Smith – Chairman GPC**