



# GESTINGTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk / RFO: Kevin B. Money  
7 Roach Vale, Colchester, Essex. CO4 3YN  
Tel: 07810781509 – Email: [gestingthorpepc@gmail.com](mailto:gestingthorpepc@gmail.com)

Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 12<sup>th</sup>. November 2020 at 7.30pm via Zoom

\* The Local Authorities and Police and Crime Panels (Coronavirus) (Flexibility of Local Authority and Police and Crime Panel Meetings) (England and Wales) Regulations 2020, enable meetings to be held remotely, and allow local authorities to hold and alter the frequency and occurrence of meetings without the need for further notice. The changes in legislation have been made in order to help smaller authorities in the performance of their duties as a result of the restrictions of movement and limitations on social contact necessary to limit the spread of the Covid-19 virus.

Present: Cllrs D. Smith (Chairman), T. Flower (Vice-Chairman), A. Cooper, C. Craig, S. Bolter, J. Nott, ECC Cllr D. Finch, BDC Cllr W. Scattergood and Kevin B. Money (Parish Clerk).  
Also present was 1 member of the public

**045/2020 Chairman Welcome.** The Chairman welcomed everyone to this very first remote Zoom meeting. The Chairman then read out this statement. Firstly, can I start by thanking my fellow Parish Councillors for electing me. I look forward to working with all of you for the good of the Parish. I would like to thank James Nott for his contribution over many years as a Parish Councillor and as Chairman and wish him and his family every happiness in their new home.

These are strange times to take over as Chairman and we all need to try to adapt accordingly. The thought of chairing my first meeting by Zoom is a somewhat daunting prospect, bearing in mind that my family consider me to be a technophobe!

In these difficult times we are lucky to live in the Parish of Gestingthorpe, in what I consider to be one of the most attractive parts of north Essex. During lockdown, it was good to see the Playing field being used and enjoyed by families and our footpaths walked. Hopefully, the grant monies that we have been fortunate to receive will give us scope to improve facilities within the Parish for the benefit of all residents

**046/2020 Apologies for Absence.** No apologies were received

**047/2020 Declaration of Interest**

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

Cllr A. Cooper declared a NPI in the Cricket Club item on the Agenda

Cllr C. Smith declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in planning application 20/01561 as it is her application

**048/2020 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>. September 2020. **All Agreed**

**049/2020 Public Participation Session**

The Chairman invited questions and observations from members of the public present.  
No questions were asked

**050/2020 Essex County Councillors report – Cllr David Finch**

Local Government reform. No plans at the moment to undertake any local Government reform. ECC reason to move from tier 1 to tier 2. There was evidence from ECC Public Health Officer that outbreaks were doubling in the Essex area. Therefore, to ask Government to place ECC into tier 2 as it was the right decision to flatten the infection curve. The curve is still flattening out. 105 per 100,000 of population. Essex is in a better position to save lives and save jobs.

Local Government Finance. Lockdown was not wanted as many businesses have suffered. ECC income has fallen by 3% so far. This year part funding from the Government should cover extra costs. £50m deficit in 2021/22 finance year. Government allowing some capital funding to overcome any reduction in income.

Cllr D. Finch then took questions from Councillors and then left the meeting



# GESTINGTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk / RFO: Kevin B. Money  
7 Roach Vale, Colchester, Essex. CO4 3YN  
Tel: 07810781509 – Email: [gestingthorpepc@gmail.com](mailto:gestingthorpepc@gmail.com)

## 051/2020 District Councillors report – Cllr W. Scattergood

Nothing too much to report

- BDC is sending out COVID-19 information on a weekly basis
- Planning is continuing even though the process is taking longer due to the restrictions
- Site visits have been scaled back
- Planning meetings take longer via Zoom
- Legal Counsel working on Pot Kiln and Pot Kiln Lodge issues and matters being kept confidential

Cllr D. Smith asked if the BDC Enforcement Officer can keep the Council updated, but due to complications it is in the hands of Counsel. Could Christopher Paggi get information to the Council. Scheme of Delegation should be responded ASAP. BDC will discuss returns on 5<sup>th</sup>. December 2020  
Cllr W. Scattergood left the meeting

## 052/2020 Representative reports

- **Highways maintenance** – Cllr D. Smith & Cllr P. Collett

Cllr P. Collett informed the meeting that

1. Proposed SID/VAS for Audley End - Jasmine Wiles from Essex Highways has informed me that all highways panels committed their budgets in June and no VAS's were commissioned, so apparently we now have to wait until March 2021 to progress with this. I will contact Jasmine again in the new year to press our case.

2. SID Sudbury Road - This device continues to smile at motorists exceeding the speed limit. To correct the device would be very expensive. It is felt that although the device is malfunctioning it is still acting as a deterrent to speeding and that it should remain as it is for the present.

Cllr D. Smith said that County Broadband it looks as though the first part of the installation has been completed and road closures/ major disruption are now behind us.

The Sudbury Road - COVID permitting, improvement works to the section of Sudbury Road along the brook are due to start in January 2021. Whilst there will inevitably be some disruption, this is a long-awaited Highway repair/improvement.

- **Playing Field/Recreation Ground** – Cllr A. Cooper

Cllr A. Cooper walked round the Playing Field on Saturday morning. A vehicle had already driven towards the pavilion and circled round, despite the damp conditions.

The unused goal posts remain behind the pavilion, which is not a problem, but is worth recording.

One of the wooden benches by the pavilion has a slat missing at the rear.

I could not see any immediate, alarming problems with trees; However, he is not a tree surgeon, and cannot be held personally responsible for this.

There is, moreover, a bracket fungus, growing at the base of one of the Chestnut trees beside the road, which may indicate a problem. The Play equipment still needs attention.

On a different topic, he hoped to put the four new 'dog fouling' signs, on public footpath signposts, before the Parish Council meeting. This morning Bertie and Cllr A. Cooper re- erected the mirror by the crossroads.

BDC Cllr Scattergood informed the meeting earlier that she has still got some funding left to allocate.

Cllr D. Smith proposed invoicing the Cricket Club £100 as a 1 off COVID-19 gesture. Cllr T. Flower seconded. **All Agreed**

The PC requested that the Cricket Club to keep the Pavilion clean and tidy and the area around the Pavilion.



# GESTINGTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk / RFO: Kevin B. Money  
7 Roach Vale, Colchester, Essex. CO4 3YN  
Tel: 07810781509 – Email: [gestingthorpepc@gmail.com](mailto:gestingthorpepc@gmail.com)

- **Broadband update**– Cllr S. Bolter & Cllr P. Collett

Cllr S. Bolter informed the meeting that the Microwave Superfast Service on the service showed 16Mb/s up and down service to be staying above 15Mb/s most of the time, only very rarely falling below 12Mb/s. (But there have been two late night losses of service). County Broadband is continuing to allow people who vulnerable to have a free top up of their data allowances. (If you run out of data the service slows down to 1Mb/s).

Where several people are using different high definition video or other data intensive services, some are finding the 16 Mb/s service too slow. There was claim that County Broadband new customers get cheaper rates.

- **Fibre to the premises Hyperfast Service.**

Without consultation, County Broadband put a chamber with an off-white lid on Church Green and laid its conduit under the Green, when they should have used Highway Land. The Chairman has been in contact with County Broadband over this and will report on progress.

By the 8<sup>th</sup> of November Telec appeared to have completed the conduit from Moat Farm to the pole opposite the Sudbury Road Homestead and pulled fibre through its sections. The progress on underground connections is unknown, but much still needs to be done on the overhead parts of the network. Testing and handover before the end of November is looking unlikely.

The connection from site boundaries to the individual premises will take about (at least?) 12 weeks.

To meet the end of February target, this would require 4 weeks of work before Christmas. If handover is 30<sup>th</sup> of November (the next working day after the Little Maplestead Road closure) there will be less than 4 weeks before Christmas. It has been suggested to County Broadband that, because they are so far behind the original promised start of service, they should start the connections from site boundaries to premises before the main system is complete and tested (if necessary leaving the fibre unconnected in the pot for underground services or up a pole for overhead ones). This has been rejected.

At the very least surveys of route from pot or pole to premises and agreeing where to put the router, could be started now that pots and poles are in place for the whole village north of the Moat.

CBB are offering GPC a Wayleave agreement. Asking for a “lift and shift clause” in the agreement

- **Footpath** – Leslie Crumpton-Taylor. Issues previously circulated to Councillors

A resident has raised a question concerning a Public Footpath which has disappeared. On checking he found that this is Footpath 24 of Wickham St. Paul which should start just inside Gestingthorpe where it should leave Footpath 19 of Gestingthorpe in an easterly direction promptly crossing the Parish Boundary and curving in a South-easterly direction to cross a stream by a bridge. There is no sign of this path on the ground. The Footpath 24 should then continue to curve until it heads due South to meet Footpath 8 of Wickham St. Paul but there is no trace of that part of Footpath 24 either. He has contacted the Parish Clerk at Wickham St. Paul for seek further clarification

- **Tree Warden** – Cllr T. Flower

It was discussed at our last meeting to budget for a full report regarding the safety/condition of trees in our care on the playing field. Cllr T. Flower has phoned the Braintree District Council's tree officer and left a message asking if they could recommend someone suitable to carry out the work and am awaiting a reply.

Our local expert on things arboreal; Graham Nicholl, did carry out a visual survey this time last year and was to send in a quotation for remedial works but the quotation never arrived I have this morning chased that up. However, we will need to get more than one quote and works carried out will have to give a written report regarding future health and safety issues relating to the trees. This we can further discuss at our meeting on the 12<sup>th</sup>.

- **Village Hall** – Cllr T. Flower

It has been a brilliant year with the refurbished loos well received and a full redecoration inside the hall as well as soundproofing and window repairs.

The committee already have plans for future projects to keep the good work going. We must surely have one of the best village halls in the area. He circulated the recent minutes which gave details of



# GESTINGTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk / RFO: Kevin B. Money  
7 Roach Vale, Colchester, Essex. CO4 3YN  
Tel: 07810781509 – Email: [gestingthorpepc@gmail.com](mailto:gestingthorpepc@gmail.com)

future works. At the meeting on the 12th I am proposing to step down as village hall rep. and informally Claire Craig has said she would take on this role. This to be agreed at our meeting of course before ratification

The Village Hall Committee have asked to use the GPC Zoom licence for future meetings. **All Agreed.** Cllr T. Flower then resigned as PC Village Hall Representative and proposed Cllr C. Craig as his replacement. This was seconded by Cllr D. Smith. **All Agreed**

## 053/2020 Planning Applications

Cllr D. Smith informed Councillors that Pot Kiln Lodge, Pot Kiln Chase - The saga with the 'unauthorised' development and residential occupation continues. Despite several request to the Planning Enforcement Department of Braintree District Council, there is a reluctance to keep the PC informed and updated on how enforcement investigations are progressing.

Braintree District Councils Review of Scheme of Planning Delegation - Referring to the circular letter received from BDC, we need to submit our response by Friday 13th November.

### 20/01561/HH - By Blacksmiths Church Street Gestingthorpe Essex CO9 3AZ

Erection of two storey rear extension, erection of first floor extension.

**GPC RESPONSE:** A well presented application. The proposed two storey extension is modest in scale, greatly improves the accommodation, is in keeping with the overall scale and character of the property and will incorporate renewable energy solutions.

We are supportive of the application.

### 20/01670/FUL - Nether Hall Farm Nether Hill Gestingthorpe Essex CO9 3BD

Retention of dust extraction and collection system.

**GPC RESPONSE:** We are supportive of small businesses of this nature in the Parish. They add to the vibrancy of the area and give potential for local employment.

We are supportive of the application for the "Retention of Dust Extraction and Collection System", subject to your Council's Environmental Health Officer advising on conditions relating to noise, environmental and health & safety issues.

## 054/2020 Decision/s made by BDC on planning applications

No decisions have been made by BDC affecting Gestingthorpe

## 055/2020 Finance

- 1) Bank balances as at 31<sup>st</sup>. October 2020 and 2020/21 budget account (previously circulated to Councillors). Councillors noted the Bank balances and Budget account for 2020/21
- 2) Councillors to agree payment of October & November 2020 finances (previously circulated to Councillors)

Cllr D. Smith proposed and Cllr C. Smith seconded the payments of October and November 2020. Be authorised. **All Agreed**

- 3) To receive an update on Internet Banking application

The RFO informed the meeting that all monies have been transferred from Lloyds Bank to Unity Trust Bank. The signatories have registered with UTB and can authorise payments submitted by the RFO.

- 4) To discuss the first draft of the 2021/22 Budget/Precept (previously circulated to Councillors)

Councillors discussed the Budget for 2021/22

- 5) Grant money received from BDC – Councillors to discuss how it is to be spent

The RFO informed the meeting of a successful Grant application from BDC totalling £10,000. This has been credited to the GPC account.

Councillors discussed the best way to spend this money for the residents of Gestingthorpe.

It was agreed to defer this item to the January 2021 meeting for further discussion.

**Date of next meetings all to be held remotely via ZOOM: 14.01.21: 11.03.21: 20.05.21 PC AGM: 08.07.21: 09.09.21: 11.11.21**



# GESTINGTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk / RFO: Kevin B. Money  
7 Roach Vale, Colchester, Essex. CO4 3YN  
Tel: 07810781509 – Email: [gestingthorpepc@gmail.com](mailto:gestingthorpepc@gmail.com)

## Items for Next Agenda

Budget/Precept report  
Oates Cottages

### 056/2020 Exclusion of the Public and Press

Councillors to Resolve that by virtue of the provisions of Section 1 (2) of the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960, the public be excluded during discussion of the following business on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted

Cllr D. Smith proposed and Cllr T. Flower seconded. **All Agreed**

### 057/2020 Staff Matters

1. To receive a report from the Employment Committee following its Meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup>. September 2020

Councillors received and agreed the report from the Employment Committee

2. To receive and agree the minutes of the Employment Committee meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup>. September 2020

Cllr T. Flower proposed and Cllr S. Bolter seconded to accept the minutes of the Employment Committee meeting held on 10<sup>th</sup>. September 2020. **All Agreed**

### 058/2020 Closure of the Meeting

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

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 9.15pm and thanked everyone for attending

Signed

14<sup>th</sup>. January 2021

David Smith