

# GESTINGTHORPE PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Clerk / RFO: Kevin B. Money  
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## Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup>. November 2023 at 7pm in the Village Hall

Present: Cllrs D. Smith (Chair), C. Craig (Vice-Chair), P. Bagby, G. Carey, P. Collett, A. Cooper, ECC Cllr P. Schwier, BDC Cllr D. Holland, Mr. Leslie Crumpton-Taylor (Internal Auditor) and Kevin B. Money (Parish Clerk). There were also 4 members of the public present.

**094/2023 Chairman welcome.** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting

**095/2023 Apologies for Absence** None received

**096/2023 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 any discussion relating to the Cricket Club  
 Cllr D. Smith declared an interest in item 103/2023 and item 099/2023

**097/2023 To approve the Minutes of the last meeting of Gestingthorpe Parish Council**

To receive and agree the minutes of the GPC meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup>. September 2023. **All Agreed**

**098/2023 Chairman's report and any update since last meeting**

Now the clocks have gone back and the evenings drawn in, the wind and rain have returned. Fortunately, we seem to have missed the worst of storms Babet and Ciaran and I am not aware that they caused any major problems in the Parish.

Football has resumed on the Playing Field and its extremely pleasing to see the field being used all year round.

Looking ahead, and in light of some comments on Village Facebook pages, do we need to raise the profile of the Parish Council with a view to keeping our Parishioners better informed of what the Parish Council does?

The Parish Magazine email was circulated requesting money for the advertisement. The cost is £70 for a quarter page, £130 for half page, £200 Full page. However, the Parish Council cannot give money to the Church for this magazine. An alternative magazine was discussed with residents and BDC D. Holland  
 Cllr D. Smith to contact the magazine committee to get further information.

The Poppy Wreath will be laid by Cllr D. Smith at 11am on 11<sup>th</sup>. November 2023. The donation of £30 was proposed by Cllr D. Smith and seconded by Cllr A. Cooper. **All Agreed**

**099/2023 Update on GT phone mast siting**

GT have been in touch with an alternative location which is behind Delvyns Lane side of wood. Concern have been raised regarding access to service the equipment. Cllr C. Craig to report back once the site visit has taken place. Councillors cannot comment further on this until a further planning application is submitted.

**100/2023 Public Participation Session**

Infestation of hornets and BDC extermination department has done a good service

**101/2023 Essex County Councillor report – ECC Cllr Peter Schwier**

- A consultation is now live for people to share their views on Essex County Council's budget plans for the coming financial year
- Gritters on standby as Essex Highways' winter service begins. 2022 over 21,000 tonnes of salt was laid
- Covid boosters are now available for eligible Essex residents this autumn
- Families encouraged to find out about the breadth of SEND inclusive clubs, activities and groups listed on the Essex Local Offer website
- Love Essex Fund - Groups encouraged to bid for micro-grants to support waste reduction projects
- ECC RAAC Schools - Update
- Changes to Cabinet Member portfolios getting Essex ready for devolution
- Essex Councils awarded more funding to tackle rough sleeping
- Essex County Council launches consultation on booking process at recycling centres
- Small grant applications open for the £7.5m grant scheme to improve the health of Essex residents
- The Essex Energy Switch is back from Monday 4 September, helping local communities come together to take the hassle out of searching for a better energy rate and supporting renewable energy.
- ECC Do not supply sandbags for any flooding emergencies

Cllr P. Schwier left the meeting

**102/2023 District Councillor report – BDC Cllr David Holland**

- BDC next corporate strategy is being developed. Natural beauty of the countryside came out on top
- Climate change was very low on the list
- BDC 2024/2025 budget is being debated.
- Devolution offer from Government has been discussed. “Greater Essex” image has been muted.
- BDC has updated its Emergency Plan
- Cllr D. Holland informed the meeting that BDC is proposing to stop the Street Cleaning grant for 2024/2025
- Cllr D. Holland spoke and updated the meeting about outstanding planning issues in Gestingthorpe

**103/2023 Planning Applications plus any application/s submitted after agenda published****23/01727/HH** - Newhouse Farm Little Maplestead Road Gestingthorpe CO9 3AS

Proposed laying of hardstanding to create a driveway and retention of a single storey outbuilding.

**RESOLVED:** The Parish Council has No Objection to this planning application**104/2023 Decision/s made by BDC on planning applications**

No planning decisions have been made by BDC affecting Gestingthorpe

**105/2023 Representative reports**

- Highways – Cllr P. Collett

**SID Sudbury Road** - The speed survey has now been carried out by ECC and the results are awaited.**Potholes** - I have reported a number of potholes and damaged road signs on the ECC Highways website.

**Speeding** - Speeding persists within the village at dangerous levels. The Rural Policing Unit carried out a speed watch on Sudbury Road on 11<sup>th</sup>. September. I will continue to liaise with Sergeant Ben Felton to establish if this can be a more regular occurrence. I met with two PCSO's at last week's coffee morning and asked if they could assist in providing some further speed watches. They seem keen to help and I have followed up our conversation with an email outlining the problem of speeding within the village and requesting further help. I have been approached by Ms Helen Skerratt who is very concerned about the speeding on Northend Road and the danger that it is causing. Helen is requesting the Parish Council's help in trying to establish a 30mph limit. Road signage has been broken and reported to ECC.

**F315 Bus Service** - The Parish Council have responded to the Consultation regarding the future of the service with a strong recommendation that the service is retained. The Parish Council's response was coordinated with neighbouring Parish Councils and in addition the Parish Council lobbied County Councillors and our District Councillor for their support

**Play Equipment** No further items to report

- Playing Field – Cllr A. Cooper

I walked around the Playing Field on Monday evening. The previous concerns re. overhanging branches remain. The winter would be a good time to plant one or two saplings along the Sudbury Roadside, so that there are young trees growing there, when less healthy trees eventually die. Could they be Queen Elizabeth or King Charles memorial trees? Someone has cut out the ditch near the Children's Play Equipment.

We hope to cut the remainder of the hedge, on a similar basis to previous years, but need to finish autumn drilling first, so that the tractor is free. (It takes several hours to put the hedge cutter on.)

The bigger gutters and down pipes which have been installed on the pavilion are a really excellent improvement and make clearing out so much easier. They were done this morning. A small modification could be considered for the bottom of the down pipes. The mowers are being kept at the back of the pavilion. The pitch is bearing up very well, despite the wet weather. Football has resumed again. Special thanks should be made to Peter Nice for marking the pitch out

The Clerk was asked to apply for Locality Funding for Fencing (30m in length £150 per metre x 30 metres = £5500 inc installation) and Car Park matting £8500

- Footpath – Cllr P. Bagby. Nothing to report
- Village Hall – Cllr P. Bagby

The Bluff my Cheese fundraiser held on 20<sup>th</sup>. October was a great success despite low attendance and several last-minute cancellations caused by the poor weather. The event made a net profit of £471.44. Current planning is for the Village Christmas Fun day and Craft Fayre on 18<sup>th</sup>. November. This event will include local crafters selling their own made items a cake stall, Children's crafts, face painting, competitions & raffle, sausage sizzle and the Belchamp Singers. On the day we will also be launching our Village Hall recipe book which contains cakes recipes provided by our coffee morning bakers. The Children's & Adults Christmas parties will be held on the 9<sup>th</sup>. & 15<sup>th</sup>. December. Hall Hire has improved with several private hires booked for November & December. As at the last committee meeting on 12<sup>th</sup>. October, the VH held a total of £5,453.64 in cash and in the bank account. The next committee meeting is on 23<sup>rd</sup>. November 2023.

**106/2023 Finance**

- a) To receive the Bank reconciliations as at 31<sup>st</sup>. October 2023  
Councillors noted the Bank reconciliations as at 31<sup>st</sup>. October 2023
- b) To receive the comparison of Actual to Budget for 2023/24  
Councillors noted the comparison of Actual to Budget for 2023/24
- c) To approve the payment of Accounts for October and November 2023 and to agree a transfer of funds to meet the Parish Councils financial requirements. **All Agreed**

**107/2023 Budget 2024/2025** - Councillors to discuss the anticipated expenditure for 2024/2025  
Councillors discussed thoroughly the budget for 2024/2025 and provisionally agreed on a Budget of £12491 for 2024/2025 resulting in a Precept demand of £11166. This item to be finalised at the 11<sup>th</sup>. January 2024 meeting. **All Agreed**

**108/2023 Items for Next Agenda**

Co-Option  
The Parish Magazine costing  
Locality Funding for Fencing (30m in length £150 per metre x 30 metres = £5500 inc installation) & Car Park matting £8500

**109/2023 Date of next meeting is on Thursday 11<sup>th</sup>. January 2024 at 7pm**  
**14.03.24: 09.05.24 (Annual Village meeting & GPC AGM): 11.07.24: 12.09.24: 14.11.24**

**110/2023 Closure of the Meeting**

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

The Chairman then closed the meeting at 9pm and thanked everyone for attending

Signed

11<sup>th</sup>. January 2024

**Chairman  
D. Smith**