

GESTINGTHORPE ANNUAL VILLAGE MEETING 2019

Held in the Village Hall on Thursday 11th April 2019 at 7.30p.m

Present: Parish Cllrs James Nott (Chair) Ashley Cooper, Steve Bolter, Terry Flower, Peter Collett, David Smith
District Cllr Wendy Scattergood
County Cllr David Finch
Helen Padgett – School Governor
7 members of the public
Parish Clerk

Apologies: None

1. **Minutes**

The minutes of the 2018 Annual Village Meeting were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

2. **Chairman's Report**

James gave a precis of Parish Council activities over the past year; including the scheduled work for a new pavilion roof, the loss of the football club, new equipment for the playing field – cross trainer and new swing seats, many of the pot holes have been filled, Speed watch being set up – 5 volunteers are needed; funding obtained for another speed display sign at Audley End. County Broadband have still not started their fibre optic work and he thought it would be a long process. He concluded by thanking the Councillors and Clerk for their support. A new Parish Clerk will take on the roll from next month and Frances was thanked for her work and presented with a bouquet of flowers.

3. **Accounts for year 2018-19**

The Parish Clerk went through the figures; the income and expenditure being roughly the same, with the carried forward balance also approximately the same as the previous financial year.

4. **Report from Governor of St. Andrew's School – Helen Padgett**

Helen reported that the school continued to thrive under the Federation with St Giles, the 3 classes will continue, as will the staff. The refurbishment will also continue, the library has been restocked and money raised by the PTA has been spent on books. There have been a number of school trips, including to the Isle of Wight and Ashley was thanked for the fortnightly visits to Wiggery Wood. Helen was thanked for her report.

5. **Reports from village organisations**

Educational Foundation

Ashley Cooper gave his annual report on the charity. The annual inspection of the field had taken place in November; income from rent and investments totalled £1,385, grants of £1,219 given for educational use and a small honorarium to the Clerk. Some investment money had been moved into more ethical funds and Ashley hoped this would continue. He thanked Andy Craig for auditing the books and Peter Collett for his work as Clerk.

Village Hall

Terry Flower gave thanks to the committee and thanked Chris Harman for his sterling work. The new toilets were completed and Chris advised that some £21,000 had been received in grants and the hall now needs to be used.

County Broadband

Steve Bolter reported that he had met with a County Broadband representative and the fibre optic cables cannot be put on poles. A new surveyor is coming in soon. The cables will be going round the back of the fields and this is due to be done May/June.

Cllr Finch advised that Borley village had got an exemption from County Broadband as they couldn't reach everyone in the village and had got Gigaclear to do the work. James said the Parish Council will do what we can to get the work done.

9. District & County Councillors Reports District Councillor

County Cllr David Finch gave an update on Essex County Council work; top 10 for efficiency, Ofsted outstanding rank for children's services, additional funding for mental health, county lines drug issues and homeless; extra money for pot holes with a 45% reduction in pot holes in Essex, additional money for footpaths and pavements, grants to PC's to benefit the community. He strongly advised the Parish Council to bid or funding via EALC. David was thanked for his report.

District Cllr Wendy Scattergood gave an update on recycling rates, fly tip removal, 1,200 dwellings granted, 154 affordable homes, 5 council sites found and approved for development, business engagement strategy, 99% superfast broadband coverage, tourism plan, handyperson scheme, hopper bus trips, investment programme. Wendy was thanked for her report.

8. Any Other Business/public questions

Road repairs and poor diversion signage was raised. Cllr Finch felt that some of the problems were due to the contactors not knowing the local area.

Village signs being cleaned – Cllr Finch said that they were being cleaned but on a less frequent basis.

The section of road on Sudbury Road where the road is being undercut was raised as information received indicated that the work would not be done until 2020/21. Cllr Finch will raise this issue.

Pot holes at the entrance to Pot Kiln Chase were still awaiting repair – Cllr Finch will take this up with Highways for us.

Oates Cottages affordable housing was raised as local applicants had found the current vacant property to be unaffordable. It was questioned how the rental figure was arrived at. Cllr Scattergood will enquire whether a lower rental price could be obtained.

The Chairman thanked everyone for attending. The meeting closed at 8:50pm

Signed Chairman Date