

MINUTES

GREAT MAPLESTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Meeting held at the Village Hall on Wednesday 11th March 2020

Present: Cllr M Elms (Chairman), Cllr S Harris, Cllr P Haylock, Cllr I Johnson, Cllr J Newton, Cllr S Last, Cllr P Maille. Cllr P Schwier BDC. Cllr D Finch ECC.

Mrs C Waters – Clerk. Members of the public – 2.

1. Apologies and reasons for absence

None. The Chairman welcomed everyone and thanked Mrs C Waters for standing in as clerk for the meeting

2. Minutes of previous meeting – The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 22nd January 2020 were accepted as a true and accurate account of proceedings of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr Harris, seconded Cllr Haylock

3. Declarations of Interest

None

4. County and District Matters

ECC Cllr Finch reported on arrangements for dealing with Coronavirus which has now been declared a pandemic. A briefing on developments in Essex will be sent to all Parish Councils via EALC. All necessary steps are being taken by ECC to protect the public and providing services. A parish update on ECC matters generally will be sent to parish clerks.

ECC Budget – pressure is being felt on Special Educational Needs and Home to School transport, due to the increased number of children eligible for services following the introduction of Education and Health Care Plans in 2014. ECC are hoping the Government budget will allocate £13-£15 million for pothole repairs in Essex

Devolution of activities has increased over the last 7 years using local knowledge of what is needed e.g. footpath repairs. Some simple Highways tasks can be devolved.

Funding – a new County Councillor Fund of up to £10,000 is being launched for community projects. Information will be sent to parishes via EALC.

Footpaths – Cllr Elms asked about footpath (pavement) repairs requested last year with no response yet. Cllr Finch will chase this up with Highways.

BDC Cllr Schwier reported on Gridserve at Great Notley which is a new electric vehicle charging station and Braintree High Street renovation which has received £1million from government.

BDC are supporting the **Great British Spring Clean** which runs from March 20th to April 13th.

BDC **Councillor Community Grants** have been successful and will continue next year.

Reduction of plastic use at BDC is being actively worked on and there is lots of information for residents on the **Love Essex** website.

5. Officers Reports and Information Exchange

Cllr Elms – Lucking St drainage. Repair has been partly completed, the gully to the south side is yet to be started

Fly tipping – some has been cleared by BDC including 2 fridges near Dynes Hall

Litter- evidence of drug dealing and litter left near Rangers has been dealt with

Dog waste bins – some were not emptied due to BDC staff shortages, but this has now been resolved. Residents are asked to keep an eye on this so that any not being emptied can be reported to BDC as soon as possible

Coronavirus – a Parish Council working party will be put together to consider actions which could be taken as a village to support each other, in particular more vulnerable residents.

Cllr Harris – Website This has now been transferred to the Voice platform which is available to Parish Councils free of charge. The website now links to the Facebook page. It should look and work the same as before, but any missing images or links that do not work should be reported so they can be fixed.

Footpaths – clearance after hedge cutting is needed. The Service Level Agreement has been renewed with ECC PROW with a grant for maintenance, but the Mortimers contract price has increased so the grant does not cover the cost.

Summer Fete – preparations are well underway with the next meeting in early April.

Cllr Newton – Village Playing Field. More stone has been added to the car park. The hedge at the far side has not been dealt with as it was too wet, and will now be looked at in September after bird nesting season is over.

Cllr Johnson – Neighbourhood Watch. A number of cars have been stolen across the district following house break-ins with theft of keys. Theft from sheds are also common.

6. Public Question time MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC WERE INVITED TO ASK QUESTIONS
None raised

7. Progress Updates

Cllr Haylock reported that working together with Little Maplestead on the VETSx2 may not be practical. The next step will be to arrange a meeting to progress with Great Maplestead only. Cllrs Elms and Newton are planning to install the new waste bin at the Village Playing Field in the very near future when the weather is drier.

8. Business Items

8.1. Review of Parish Clerk Role and Salary: Cllr Elms – The Personnel Committee has conducted a Clerk's salary review in conjunction with an evaluation and understanding of the Clerk's role for Great Maplestead Parish Council. A new job description and contract of employment has been agreed with the clerk, with a salary review that reflects national (NALC) pay scales and is in line with comparable responsibilities in neighbouring councils. Annual performance appraisals and salary reviews will be carried out. This decision was made by the Personnel Committee with delegated powers and will take effect from 1st April 2020. The job description will be published on the website.

8.2. Environmental Projects: Cllr Maille – Verges There is disappointment about the loss of special verge status at the verge between Long Fen and Barrett's Hall. The verge has been cut early by the landowner which will mean the Star of Bethlehem and muscari will not flower. Removal of hedges and trees has created a hostile environment for these plants. It was agreed to discuss this with the landowner and to take photos over the year to monitor species growth with a view to considering taking back control of the cutting in future. **Trees and hedgerows** The Conservation Volunteers (TCV) offer free packs of hedge plants if a suitable location can be agreed for planting. The Village Playing Field hedge was cut back for visibility and children's safety. Other locations to be considered. **Wild Flower planting** It may be possible to plant bee bombs at the border of the Playing Field, the grass cutting contractor would need to be

informed. There may be cost for purchase of the bee bomb flower seeds. Agenda item for May meeting

9. Financial Report

9.1. Current bank balances:-

Current account:	£30.09	Reserve account:	£7063.03
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9.2. Noting of sums received:-

NWB Interest Paid January to February 2020			£2.08
BACS HMRC VAT Reimbursement			£1266.67
Cheque – Great Maplestead Village Hall –	donation for repairs to		£1098.54
	playground equipment		

9.3. Ratification of payments made:-

Proposed Cllr Haylock, seconded Cllr Johnson, agreed unanimously			
DD Eon – Quarterly Street Lighting Electricity			£28.60
OB Geosphere Ltd – Parish Online Mapping Facility			£60.00
OB EALC – Training, Planning Briefing – Cllr S Last			£78.00
OB Playdale Playgrounds – Repairs to Playground Equipment			£1098.54

Transfers

TF From Reserve Account to Current Account			£60.00
TF From Reserve Account to Current Account			£100.00
TF From Reserve Account to Current Account			£1100.00

Payment(s) to be made requiring approval:-

OB EALC – Training, Grants & Funding Course – Mrs A Crisp			£114.00
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9.4. Other Financial

Precept 2020/21 sanctioned by BDC at £8068.00

10. Planning

10.1. Application Decisions

19/02252/HH & 19/02252/LBC Chelmshoe House Farm, Monks Lodge Road.
Reconstruction of brick wall including two gates Granted 3/2/2020

10.2. Applications Received

20/00206/FUL Orchard House, Dynes Hall Road. Change of use from garden to equestrian menage and addition of new stable blocks.

Council response "No objection, on condition it is for private use and no obtrusive lighting causing light pollution (RLP65) as stated in the planning application"

11. Correspondence

Parishioner Correspondence – Dogs mess found and cleared up from Village Playing Field on 2 recent occasions.

12. Content for E-newsletter

- Lucking Street drainage
- VETSx2 scheme
- Summer Fete
- Noise Pollution
- Essex County Council news

13. Items for the Next Agenda

- Annual Meeting of the Parish Council: Election of Chairman
- Wildflower planting at the Village Playing Field or other location
- VETS x2 scheme

14. Date of next meeting

Wednesday 6th May 7.30pm at the Village Hall

The meeting closed at 9.01pm

DRAFT