

MINUTES

GREAT MAPLESTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council Meeting held via Zoom video conference on Wednesday 18th November 2020 Present Cllr.M.Elms (Chairman).Cllr.S.Harris.Cllr.P.Haylock.Cllr.I.Johnson.Cllr.J.Newton.Cllr.S.Last.Cllr.P.Maile. Mrs.A.Crisp – Clerk. Members of the Public – 1.

- 1. Apologies and reasons for absence**–None
- 2. Minutes of previous meeting** –The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on the 9th September 2020; and the minutes of the Planning meeting held on the 2nd November 2020 were accepted as a true and accurate account of proceedings of the meeting. Proposed by Cllr.Johnson, seconded Cllr.Harris.
- 3. Declarations of Interest** - Cllr.Newton declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest Agenda Item 8.1 Pre-Planning Application from Telefonica for Installation of Mobile Phone Mast at Toldish Hall Road, as landowner to some of the sites considered within the application.
- 4. County and District Matters** – District Cllr.P. Schwier provided an update from BDC – Major projects including Manor Street, Braintree and the pedestrianisation of Braintree town centre are on target. The Horizon 20 development is going well and the Gridserve forecourt, the first in the country, is scheduled to open at the end of November. The council and police have been working together in enforcement of any breaches of lockdown regulations. There has been an increase in recycling during the lockdown periods this year; Community transport is still in use but a more restricted service. A BDC Facebook page providing support for businesses has been very proactive; reliance on digital technology is increasing and the BDC website will be upgraded with a focus on making it easier to use. Cllr.Schwier still has some funds available within his District Councillor Grant Scheme for community organisations, funds are limited but organisations within Maplestead are encouraged to apply.
County Cllr.D.Finch provided an update from ECC – **Local Government Reform** - project has been delayed due to focus on Brexit activities. Under the scheme it is intended to remove the County and District Council structure and replace with Unitary Authorities and introduce more mayors. In Essex the plan is to have 4 Unitary Authorities. The earliest this work will now be looked at is July 2021. **Covid 19 ECC Decision to move to Tier 2** – the decision was made after much consultation and observation of pandemic trends in northern England. ECC felt that an early move to Tier 2 would avoid an accelerated doubling of cases in the district, at the time Essex were 3rd highest in the region for the number of Covid cases. Essex is now in the bottom 2 in the region which it is felt endorses the decision. **Budget 20/21** – impacted by the number of additional people taking council tax holidays or a loss of jobs caused by the pandemic, with a 4% reduction in council tax income. There has been some central government support to help bridge the gap but there will need to be further cost efficiencies to help reduce the deficit. **Budget 21/22** – Estimate £50million budget gap but it is felt this will be manageable. ECC have received central government funding of Winter support for families on low incomes, similar funding was received earlier this year which was allocated across a number of ears including help to fund school meals and towards businesses hardest hit by Covid 19 enforced restrictions. **Highways** – More cycle routes and electronic charging points are being introduced.

The Chairman invited questions

Q. Will Essex move back to Covid Tier 2 at the end of the current lockdown period?

A. ECC still evaluating but it is hoped that Essex will move back to Tier 1, due to the benefits of previously going into Tier 2.

Cllr.Finch left the meeting at this time.

5. **Officers Reports & Information Exchange – Cllr.Newton** – concerns raised regarding 3 large puddles that have formed on the road between Dynes Hall and Castle Hedingham, following recent heavy rain. They are just about passable with caution but the drainage in the area should be addressed with pipes unblocked and gullies dug out. The drain at the top of Purls Hill needs “jetting out”. Cllr.Elms will contact Highways.
District Cllr.D Finch joined the meeting at this time.
Cllr.Haylock – Nothing to report
Cllr.Johnson – Large puddles also in Dynes Hall Road going towards Halstead, bear to the stream. Gullies need digging out here too. Cllr.Elms will contact Highways. No reports have been received from the police, to date, regarding break-ins at Kofali farm.
Cllr.Last – Dog waste bins and litter bins are still not being emptied regularly. Cllr.Elms advised he has already spoken to BDC 3 times regarding this problem but he will contact again.
Cllr.Maile – Has received some offers of free seeds from seed companies which will help with the planting of the new earth bund at the village playing field. May also acquire some free bulbs. Road drain outside Buttercups in Church Street has been blocked for several months. Cllr.Elms will add to the list of tasks for Highways.
Cllr.Harris – See Appendix 1 for report.
Cllr.Elms – Litter picking has been carried out by Cllrs.Elms/Last and parishioner volunteers working independently to avoid any conflict with Covid 19 restrictions.

6. **Public question time**

Comment:The council’s response to the mobile home application at Kofali Farm was not showing on the BDC planning portal. Answer: Cllr.Harris confirmed it was showing earlier in the day but that it would be checked again just to be certain.

Q. Will the Chairman allow questions after Agenda item 8.

A. The Chairman confirmed public questions would be invited after this item.

7. **Progress Updates** –

- The proposed earth bund at the village playing field has been deferred to the Spring as the ground is currently too wet.
- Cllr.Johnson advised that parking in lower Church Street has improved of late, but continues to be monitored.

8. **Business Items**

- 8.1 **Pre-Planning Application from Telefonica for Installation of Mobile Phone Mast and Base Station at Toldish Hall Road** (*Cllr.Newton remained in the meeting but did not participate or vote on business item*) – The Clerk read out the results of the recent informal parish poll, the full details of which will be published on the council’s website and via the Maplestead Magna Carta. 72% had voted against the proposed installation at Toldish Hall Road; 50% indicated agreement to the installation of a mobile phone mast and base station at a more agreeable location within the village, and a further 5% were in favour of a more sympathetically located installation.
The council debated the responses and the proposal, at length.
Cllr.Elms proposed that the council support the outcome of the informal parish poll which is to reject the proposed site. Seconded Cllr.Harris. Vote in favour 6.
Cllr.Elms proposed that the council include within its response to Galliford Try, the suggested alternative locations put forward by parishioners, but make it clear the council do not currently endorse any of these proposed alternative locations. Seconded Cllr.Harris. Vote divided 3 in favour, 3 against. The Chairman exercised his casting vote – Vote in favour 4.
Cllr.Elms proposed that village concerns, for or against, the installation of the proposed mobile phone mast were included in the councils response. Seconded Cllr.Harris. Vote in favour 6.

The Chairman invited further questions from members of the public

Q. Will the council endorse that there is a need for improved mobile phone coverage in the village?

A. Cllr.Elms confirmed that the council endorsed there is a need for improved mobile phone coverage.

9. **Financial Report**

9.1 **Current bank balances:-**

Current account:	£368.52	Reserve account:	£9212.63
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9.2 **Noting of sums received:-**

NWB Interest Paid September – October 2020			14p
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BDC – Precept 2 nd Payment			£4034.00
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9.3 **Ratification of payments made:-**

DD E-On Electric – Quarterly Street Lighting			£28.60
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SO – Clerk Quarterly Salary – Mrs A Crisp			£1624.80
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Sudbury Office Supplies - 2xpack printer paper, 1 x pack laminator pouches			£17.60
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DD LCN Domain Name – 2 year renewal			£21.54
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DD AVG - Annual Anti-Virus Protection renewal			£74.99
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Zoom Virtual Meeting Platform – monthly subscription			£14.39
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Transfers

TF From Reserve Account to Current Account			£2000.00
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Payment(s) to be made requiring approval:-

10. **Planning**

10.1 **Application Decisions**

None

11. **Correspondence – For notification**

Community Initiative Fund – Funding of £2978.00 awarded towards cost of 1 x boules pitch and new picnic/bench table. The council has until March 2022 to apply the funding to the project.

12. **Content for E-newsletter**

Mobile phone informal parish poll results & council response letter; Planning application at Kofali farm; Forthcoming events

13. **Items for the Next Agenda**

Budget/Precept

14. **Date of next meeting:**

20th January 2021 at 7.30pm – *subject to review & government guidelines regarding Covid 19*

MEETING CLOSED 8.05pm

Signed.....TRUE COPY.....

Dated 20th January 2021