

Minutes of the Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 21st January 2026 at Greenstead Green Village Hall.

These are draft minutes and yet to be agreed by the Parish Council.

Present.

Cllr. Paul Foster. Chairman.

Cllr. Ian Pleasance

Cllr. Derek Mason. Vice-Chairman.

Cllr. Jeremy Siggers

Cllr. Gemma Todd.

Cllr. Debbie Wass

County Cllr. Chris Siddall

Amanda Degnan – Clerk to the Parish Council.

4 Members of the public

1/26 Apologies for absence. Apologies were received and noted from Cllr. Chris Butler who had been delayed.

2/26 Declarations of interest. To declare any pecuniary or non-pecuniary interests in accordance with the Code of Conduct. There were no declarations of Interest.

3/26 Minutes: Item 1: To approve the minutes of the November 2025 ordinary meeting. The minutes of the November 2025 ordinary meeting were duly approved. Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Mason. Approved.

Item 2: To approve the minutes of the APM held in April 2025. The minutes of the APM meeting held in April 2025 were duly approved. Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Pleasance. Approved.

Item 3: To approve the minutes from the Finance working group held in November 2025. The minutes of the Finance working group held in November 2025 were duly approved. Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Todd. Approved.

Item 4: Matters arising from the November minutes that are not on the agenda. All matters arising were on the agenda.

4/26 County Councillor's report. The Chairman, Cllr. Foster welcomed County Cllr. Chris Siddall to the meeting. Cllr. Siddall provided an update on the following items:

- May elections for County Councillors – Thurrock and Basildon have asked for a postponement due to the upcoming Local Government Reorganisation (LGR). Essex County Council (ECC) feel it is up to the Government to decide.

The mayoral elections which were also due to be held in May have been cancelled.

- Local Highway Panels (LHP) – These are starting to wind down due to the LGR. Money left over is being used to install signs outside Gosfield School in White Ash Green
- The pavement at Crocklands had been repaired under the Members Scheme. Residents reported that only half of the pavement had been done and that the most damaged bit still needed to be replaced. County Cllr Siddall asked for photos and What3Words location to be sent to him so that the repair can be completed.
- National Pothole survey- reported that Essex was green for pothole repairs.
- Health and Wellbeing Consultation with Essex residents- ongoing, due to end 3rd February 2026.
- Essex Cabinet changes- County Cllr. Mark Platt is now in charge of Highways.
- Stansted Airport- this had been approved for expansion which will lead to more jobs in the area. It is one of the biggest employers in Braintree District Council area (BDC).

Cllr. Pleasance asked what the process was for highways initiatives now that LHP's have gone. Highways Minister will now be responsible for this.

Cllr. Siggers asked if there would be new runways and terminals at Stansted. They will be using existing infrastructure.

5/26 District Councillor's report. In the absence of District Cllr. Peter Schwier there was no report.

6/26 Precept/Budget 2026/27: Item 1. To agree and set the budget. At the Finance Working Group held in November it had been decided to raise the budget by £610 from £13,740 to £14,350. The Chairman, Cllr. Foster proposed accepting and setting the budget at £14,350, Seconded Cllr. Mason . All approved

Item 2. To agree and set the Precept. The precept is to be set at £14,350 an increase of £610 which will result in a Band D property paying £51.46 for 2026/27 council tax year. Last year it was £49.27. This is an increase of 4.44%. **Proposal: To agree to set the Precept at £14,350.** Proposed: Cllr. Foster, Seconded: Cllr. Mason. All approved.

Item 3. Chairman to sign the Precept. The Chairman, Cllr. Foster and the Clerk signed the Precept request. **Action:** Clerk to send to BDC Update. Done.

7/26 Finance: Item 1: Update regarding opening an online savings account at Saffron Walden Building Society. The Clerk had investigated further and although they had good interest rates no withdrawals were permitted during the year. Also, as a corporate body the Parish Council could not take advantage of the accounts. It was decided for the time being not to pursue this any further.

Item 2. Update on adding Cllr's Siggers, Todd and Wass as signatories to the NatWest bank account. Cllr. Todd still needed to sign as the email went into her

spam folder. Update. All parties have now signed and should be signatories on the account.

Item 3: To agree the accounts for payment. These were circulated prior to the meeting. Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Mason. All agreed. The accounts for payment were duly approved.

Method	Payee	Amount	Reason
Bacs	Costcutters	£508.93	chair
Card	Ionos	£6.00	website November
Card	Mythic Beasts	£6.00	website November
Bacs	DM Payroll	£72.00	payroll
SO	Mrs A Degnan	£374.05	Wage December Paid in 2 payments £348.85 December and January £25
Card	Mythic Beasts	£6.00	website December
Card	Ionos	£6.00	website December
Card	Three	£25.00	Phone top-up December
Card	Clear Council	£251.46	Village Hall insurance
SO	Mrs A Degnan	£374.05	Wage January Paid in 2 payments £348.85 January and January £25.20
Bacs	HMRC	£49.40	Income tax November and December
Card	Land Registry	£14.00	Title register for Playing Field
Bacs	Village Hall	£20.00	hire of hall for 21st January
Bacs	Mrs A Degnan	£14.40	Expenses
	Total payments for January 2026	£1,727.29	

8/26 Planning and Braintree District Council (BDC) Planning applications.

Item 1: Planning Applications: None.

Any other Planning Applications received after the agenda was published. At the Chairmans discretion.

25/02230/REM | Application for Approval of Reserved Matters (in respect of Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale) pursuant to outline planning permission 20/01493/OUT granted 14.04.2023 for: Outline application with all matters reserved except access for up to 55 dwellings with new landscaping, open space, access and associated infrastructure | Land At Mount Hill Halstead Essex. This was sent to Halstead Town Council instead of Greenstead Green. The Clerk complained on behalf of the Parish Council as the development is in the Parish of Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural. The consultation had now been extended to 6th February 2026 to allow for the parish's comments. Due to the number of documents involved in the application it was agreed to send comments to the Clerk which will be sent on to Planning before the deadline.

REVISED INFORMAL CONSULTATION - COLNE ENGAINE FOOTPATH 4 & GREENSTEAD GREEN AND HALSTEAD RURAL FOOTPATH 45 SECTION 119 HIGHWAYS ACT DIVERSION. This had arrived that afternoon. It is regarding the

relocation of a footpath at Langley Mill. Comments are to be sent to Essex Highways by 12pm 18th February 2026. It was agreed that comments were to be sent to the Clerk.

Item 2: Update on previous Planning applications. For information only.

25/02613 Ward Farm: Extension and demolition of an extension The Parish Council had objected to this and as, yet it is not determined.

APPLICATION NO : DESCRIPTION : 25/02420/NMA Development Management Causeway House Braintree Essex CM7 9HB Tel: 01376 557779 Email: planning@braintree.gov.uk Non-Material Amendment to permission 24/02300/REM granted 09.05.2025 for: Application for Approval of Reserved Matters (in respect of Appearance, Landscaping, Layout and Scale) pursuant to Outline planning permission 19/00493/OUT granted 16.11.2022 (Allowed at appeal) for: Outline application for up to 200 residential dwellings (including 30% affordable housing), planting, landscaping, public open space and children's play area and sustainable drainage system (SuDS). All matters reserved with the exception of access. Amendment would allow:-Revisions to the Materials Parameter Plan including amendments to render colours LOCATION : Land Off Bournebridge Hill Greenstead Green Essex. This had been for information only and had since been approved.

25/02601/VAR Stone Lakes, Slow Hill. Alterations. This had been approved but Planning had once again consulted Halstead Town Council and not the parish. The Clerk had complained to Planning on behalf of the Parish Council.

County Cllr. Siddall advised contacting District Cllr. Spray who is the BDC Cabinet member responsible for Planning about the continuing issue of consultations being sent to Halstead when the developments are in Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish.

Item 3 Update on possible planning breach at field opposite Cebanna, Russells

Road. Cllr. Pleasance reported that Planning Enforcement had decided there had been no breach. No further work had taken place since the visit from Enforcement, but residents are keeping an eye on the situation.

9/26 Playing Field: Item 1: Update on playing field. Cllr. Mason asked for approval to spend £34.80 per swing seat plus VAT on 2 swing seats (this did not include delivery) to replace the ones in the Playing Field. This was agreed. Cllr. Mason will look into different models as the current seats were only bought in 2023. He will also contact the supplier of the current seats to see if anything can be done.
Action: Cllr. Mason.

Item 2: Update on the landscaping and reseeding of the additional 4-5m of land in the Playing Field. The land had been sprayed. In Spring when it is dryer he will reseed the land. **Action:** Cllr. Mason.

Item 3: Update on purchasing new benches for the Playing Field from Parish Council funds. This had arrived but needs a location. It was agreed that Cllr. Mason will meet with members of the Pétanque Club to agree a location. They will contact him by text when they are next in the Playing Field on a Sunday. **Action:** Cllr. Mason

10/26 Playing Field Charity: To consider applying to the Charity Commission to have the Children's Playing Field charity closed. Cllr. Butler had received an

email from the Charity Commission regarding the Children's Playing Field charity's failure to file any accounts with them. The charity had not lodged any accounts with the Charity Commission since 2008. Cllr. Butler had no memory of being a Trustee for this charity. The Clerk had investigated and read out a list of names of the Trustees which included the Parish Council, Cllr. Butler and others one of whom was deceased. There is possibly a bank account with funds in it, but no one knows where the account is held.

It was decided to investigate further due to the account and funds. Cllr. Mason volunteered to speak to Mr Fossick who was one of the Trustees and a former Chair of the Parish in the hope he may have information regarding this charity, the bank account and conversion stocks which seem to relate to the Playing Field. **Action:** Cllr. Mason. To be placed on the next agenda.

11/26 Highways: Item1: Parish Councillors Highway issues. The Clerk confirmed that she had reported all Highways issues brought up at the November meeting to Essex Highways. She had not received any updates.

White Ash Green: Cllr Pleasance reported that flooding was still occurring at Sloe Hill. He had complained to County Cllr. Siddall. Cllr. Siddall confirmed that he had asked for it to be investigated.

Cllr. Siggers asked about the potential bypass, and it was confirmed that it will not be funded by Essex Highways and most likely privately funded by all the potential developments around Halstead and will take years to be built. Bournebridge Hill will be the start of it.

Item 2: Pavement at Crocklands. This had been dealt with under Agenda Item 4/26 County Councillor's report.

12/26 Land Registry: To agree to approach the Land Registry to have the registration for the Village Hall amended to show the following: Greenstead Green Village Hall owned by Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council on behalf of the Greenstead Green Village Hall Charity. It is currently showing as being solely owned by the Parish Council. This had been discovered by the Village Hall Treasurer, Debbie Wass, who had requested the documents as the hall's insurers had asked for them. The insurers had then refused to insure the hall as it was only owned by the Parish Council and not on behalf of the Charity. The Parish Council had paid to insure the hall and the hall Management Committee had reimbursed them. **Proposal:** To agree to approach the Land Registry to have the registration for the Village Hall amended to show the following: Greenstead Green Village Hall owned by Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council on behalf of the Greenstead Green Village Hall Charity. Proposed Cllr. Foster, Seconded Cllr. Mason. All agreed. **Action:** Cllr. Wass to liaise with the Land Registry. To be placed on the next agenda

13/26 Village Hall: Item 1. To receive an update on the installation of the new heating system. Cllr. Wass reported that the heating system is due to be delivered in early February and should be installed by Sibley Electrics in February/March. **Action:** To be placed on the next agenda

14/26 Payroll: To agree to accept the new terms and fees from DM Payroll Services. Proposed Cllr. Foster Seconded Cllr. Pleasance. All agreed. **Action:** Clerk to sign terms and send to DM Payroll. Update Done.

15/26 Neighbourhood Plan: To consider entering a response regarding Great Bardfield Neighbourhood Plan – Regulation 16 Consultation. A consultation from Toppesfield was received that day and was also discussed. As these are not close to the parish it was agreed not to comment.

16/26 Parish Clerk: Item 1. To appoint someone to monitor the Parish Clerk email until a new clerk is appointed. Item 2. To appoint someone to hold onto all the Parish Council equipment and paperwork. These 2 items were taken together. Cllr. Pleasance volunteered to monitor the emails and hold onto the equipment and paperwork. **Action:** Cllr. Pleasance.

There had been no response to the advert on the EALC website. The Chairman Cllr. Foster had gone back to EALC and asked for the advert to be readvertised for another 4 weeks. It will also be advertised on the noticeboard and parish website. There are also Locums that can be used, and the Clerk had given the Chairman a Locum list from EALC. The Chairman will also approach neighbouring clerks to see if they can help or would be interested in the role. **Action:** Cllr. Foster.

17/26 Emails: To confirm that all Councillors have access to the new .gov.uk email addresses and our using them. Councillors confirmed that they had access but there are a few issues. Cllr. Wass's emails are not going into the new sent box, but the old email sent box and councillors with Apple phones/tablets reported that the attachments the clerk had sent with the agenda had been converted into other files that they could not open. Cllr. Pleasance offered to help with any issues the Councillors had.

It was noted that this year's AGAR will have a question asking if parish councils have their own website and are using .gov or .org emails and not personal emails or Gmail/outlook accounts for council emails.

18/26 Local Government Reorganisation (LGR) consultation. Update on Parish Council's response to the recent LGR consultation. The Chairman Cllr. Foster had filled the consultation out as Chairman of the Parish Council. It was felt that the Thurrock proposal was the best choice as it had Braintree, Chelmsford, and Uttlesford together and these have close links.

19/26 Public comment. A resident asked for the drains to be jetted as they are all blocked. A resident asked if the tree at Crocklands had been reported. The Clerk confirmed that if had been reported to ECC Highways.

20/26 To receive reports from outside bodies, training courses, Village Representatives. None.

21/26 Future agenda items. Insurance quotes. Items on the agenda

The Chairman Cllr. Foster then thanked the Clerk Amanda Degnan for all her help over the past 9 years and presented her with a gift of appreciation from the Councillors. The Clerk thanked the members and the residents.

There being no further items to discuss. The meeting closed at 8.41pm

Next Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 11th March 2026. 7.15pm Village Hall.

Signed.....

Chairman – Greenstead Green and Halstead Rural Parish Council.

Date.....

Amanda Degnan

Amanda Degnan – Clerk to the Parish Council, C/O Greenstead Green Post Office, Greenstead Green Farm, Greenstead Green, CO9 1QY. 07782209224 parishclerk@greensteadgreenandhalsteadrural-pc.gov.uk .

WWW. greensteadgreenpc.org.uk