

GREAT YELDHAM PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on
Thursday 12th January 2023 at 7.30pm, Reading Room, Gt Yeldham

Present: Cllr Philip Rawlinson (Chairman)
 Cllr John Marks (Vice-Chairman)
 Cllr Anne Burrows
 Cllr Phil King
 Cllr Mark Lovell
 Cllr Bikaramjit Singh
 Cllr Gary Theobald

In attendance: Tracy Wigmore (Parish Clerk)
 3 members of the public present.

- 23/001 Welcome and apologies for absence.**
 Apologies received from Cllr Burr and Sargeant.
- 23/002 Declarations of Interest.**
 Cllr Marks declared a non-pecuniary interest at item 23/008 and 23/011
 Cllrs King and Lovell declared a non-pecuniary interest at item 23/008.
- 23/003 To approve the minutes of the Parish Council**
RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 8th November 2022 were a correct record. All in favour. Chairman signed the minutes.
- 23/004 Public Participation Session with respect to items on the agenda and other matters of mutual interest.**
 Representative from the GYMen's Shed reported on progress. The project had received a £5k grant for a 3rd container which must be spent by the 31st March 2023 or returned; advised to submit a request to extend the deadline. Delays due to planning requiring a retrospective planning application for the change of use of land, there is a risk that planning may not grant permission. Planning Application submission by 31st January. Policies and procedures completed for Constitution, Health & Safety, Conduct and Dignity. Once work on the Shed has been completed, the Parish Council will be invited to attend. Grants – time critical, need to ensure that grant funding can be accessed/approved asap rather than waiting for approval at the next Parish Council meeting. Chair reported that there is an item on the agenda to discuss these issues.
 Parish Council acknowledged the brilliant work and time volunteers had undertaken in progressing the project so quickly.
- 23/005 Invitation to Cllr Peter Schwier, Essex County Council (ECC) and Cllr Richard van Dulken, Braintree District Council (BDC) to address the meeting on matters of mutual interest.**
Cllr Peter Schwier
 With inflation above 10 percent, council finances are under huge pressure. Inflation, rises in utility prices and interest rates coupled with increased demand have added £74m more to the cost of services this year. Balancing those factors with the need to limit impacts on household budgets in the current cost-of-living crisis mean a proposed Council Tax increase of 3.5 per cent. This is made up of a 1.5 per cent council tax increase (for front line services), plus a further 2 per cent ring-fenced to Adult Social Care. This means for an average Band D property household, the ECC element of Council Tax will increase by £49.05 next year, or 94p per week the equivalent to a pint of milk per week.

Cllr Van Dulken

- Christmas Tree collection from 9:00-09:30am The Old Council Yard, Hedingham Rd
- Warm spaces - delighted Gt Yeldham has created a warm space.
- Budget- no increase in Councillor allowances, possibility of green waste charges being introduced. Garden waste collection is a discretionary service and local authorities can make a reasonable charge, 65 per cent of local authorities in the UK already do. The proposal is £45 per year for 12 months. The increase in inflation, affecting the cost of the service, the ongoing impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic, together with rising energy and fuel costs, the cost-of-living situation and uncertainty over government funding facing all councils, BDC have put forward some difficult proposals about where to make savings and/or increase income.
- ECC highways rangers service will cease, support staff will be re-deployed.
- Community grant £400 has been set aside for the shed, balance to support warm homes/cost of living initiatives.
- Wethersfield airfield site. A year has passed since the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) announced their proposed plans to build two prisons. The Council and local communities are still waiting on a decision whether the MoJ are going to submit a planning application for the proposals or not.
- Community led repair care/mending workshops – link to GYMS, could access additional grants.
- Potholes - Cllrs Burrows raised concerns regarding the number of potholes in the village. ECC are responsible for Highways. To report and review the status of Potholes use the 'Tell us and Track it' website at <https://www.essexhighways.org/tell-us>. Levelling up for North Braintree improve road infrastructure especially Sible Hedingham to Gosfield.

23/006 Planning Applications – Received as at 6th January 2023

None received.

23/007 Planning Decisions as at 6th January 2023

22/00552/HH Retention of 1.8m boundary fence adjacent to highway. Canie Hall, Toppesfield Road. **PENDING**

22/01781/HH Retention of single storey rear extension to outbuilding | Canie Hall Toppesfield Road. **PENDING**

22/02451/HH Part single part two storey rear extension and first floor side extension | 10 Butlers Way. **PENDING**

22/02520/HH Erection of two storey side extension. 25 Market Grove. **PENDING**

22/02812/TPOCON Notice of intent to carry out works to trees in a conservation Area: Yew (T1) Crown reduction of 1.5 metres. Oak House, Church Rd. **PENDING**

23/008 Great Yeldham Men's Shed (GYMS)

Update by Cllr Lovell. Minutes of the inaugural meeting and policies (circa for information).

- Retrospective Planning permission was required for the change of use of land for the stationing of 2 x storage containers. Submission deadline 31st January 2023. Planning fees £263.20 per application.
- GYMS have requested the placement of 3rd container on the site (dependent upon whether planning permission is granted). A separate planning application will need to be completed, costing an additional £263.20.
- An estimated £2k for the lining/wiring of the shed (grant funded) will be completed shortly. Prior approval for goods and materials up to the value of £2k are required to

keep the project moving forward, over this value authorisation will be sort from the Chairman.

- Zurich Municipal, the Parish Council's insurers have agreed to cover the project within the existing insurance policy (for an additional £56.00 for Public Liability and containers) but the expectation from Zurich is that this is short term until the project is set up as its own entity. Therefore, it would be prudent to set a target date in which the Men's Shed should be set up and independent from the Parish Council (ideally this would be 31st March 2023), date to be identified by the Project Leader
- Actions required: installation of electricals and sign off by qualified Electrician, completion of PAT testing of electrical appliances/tools, installation of Smoke/Carbon Monoxide Alarms, construction of work benches.

RESOLVED:

1. that the **Great Yeldham Men's Shed Policies and Health & Safety Statement are approved. Cllr Lovel to undertake Risk Assessment.**
2. that the fees for the planning applications are funded by the Parish Council, a total of **£526.40.**
3. that prior approval for the purchase of goods/materials up to **£2k is approved.**
4. that the placement of a 3rd container is approved subject to planning permission being approved.

Proposed: Cllr Theobald. Seconded: Cllr Burrows. All in favour.

23/009

Bowtells' Meadow

Update by Cllr Theobald. 3rd meeting discussed the meadow potential; including additional requirements for seating areas and play equipment and where to site them; identifying costs, budget and grant funding opportunities. Cllr Singh had investigated various ideas and design concepts for the rest of the meadow. Keen to explore commissioning GYMS to make some equipment (benches, wooden stilts) need to identify what is feasible. Cllr Burrows has undertaken research into river maintenance and landowner's responsibilities. Next task to draft options/budget and present to the Parish council and residents for comments. The s106 agreement dated 14/01/20 states that a sum of £30k had been set aside for 'Bowtells Meadow Maintenance and Improvement' and that *'the Owner shall use reasonable endeavours to complete the Bowtells Meadow Land Transfer prior to the first Occupation of the 16th Dwelling'*. Cllr Rawlinson reported that Rose builders were working on the 15th sale but not all occupied, only 9 presently. The Clerk advised that there was a report undertaken in 2015 'Bowtells Meadow Recommendations For Open Space' which assessed the existing condition, future opportunities and maintenance costs of the meadow. Clerk to forward copy to Cllr Theobald.

For note.

23/010

Village Hub (Warm Places)

Update by Cllr Rawlinson. The hub opened for a couple of weeks before Christmas but no-one attended. Hub to reopen on Monday 16th January from 10.00 am to 12 noon: links in with the opening times for the Post Office and Prescription Collection Services operating from the Reading Room. Cllr Singh had generously donated refreshments to the village hub.

For note.

23/011

Gt Yeldham Table Tennis Club

Report by Cllr Marks. The Reading Room Management Committee had received a donation of equipment from Braintree & District Table Tennis League. Publicity in the 4VM had generated enough resident interest to form a table tennis club. To extend the table tennis sessions on offer, the RR have been donated a second table, a third table could be purchased at a reduced cost of £275. A club would need to be set up and membership fees charged to pay for the hire of the RR and refreshments. Cllr Marks enquired whether

the Parish Council could make a donation towards the purchase of an additional table. Cllr Rawlinson stated that the 'Club' would need to be formally constituted before a donation could be made. However, a table could be purchased by the Parish Council to help extend the recreation provision for the benefit of the community. Concerns were raised regarding storage; the back cupboard would need to be cleared before a table is purchased.

RESOLVED: that the Parish Council purchase an additional table to extend the provision of table tennis for the benefit of the community; that £275 is reallocated from the underspend from Reserves – Big Jubilee Lunch

Proposed: Cllr Rawlinson. Seconded: Cllr Lovell. All in favour.

23/012 Braintree District Council Open Spaces Action Plan - Update 2023

The Open Spaces Action Plan is a key document used by the Local Planning Authority to justify seeking S.106 monitory contributions for Public Open Space improvements across the district. The plan is reviewed annually to keep up to date, in order to provide the best opportunity to improve open areas. General Discussion held on entries for Gt Yeldham. Recreation Ground Management Committee to review entries and forward to Clerk for amendments, submission date to BDC 27th January 2023.

For Action.

23/013 Proposed Pedestrian Path Linking Strawberry Fields Development & Public Right of Way (Footpath 40)

Correspondence received from BDC regarding the proposed pedestrian path linking Strawberry Fields to the Recreation Ground (copy circa). Condition 18 of the Reserved Matters approval required that the developer provide plans to show details of the proposed pedestrian link to connect the site to the former railway line to the west of the site. ECC own the land adjacent to the site, where the pedestrian link would be constructed. ECC have agreed in principle to allow BDC to construct a path between the development and public right of way, through the woodland. BDC can use S106 monies to create a path, clearing vegetation as required and laying a path with self-binding gravel. The path would not be a formal public right of way, but a permissive route created to allow the public to use it. ECC agreement is conditional on future arrangements for management being agreed. ECC will not assume responsibility for maintaining the path and BDC would look to the Parish Council to take on responsibility for maintaining the short length (20m) of new path. The maintenance would probably require periodic cutting back of vegetation, keeping the path clear, and occasional work to maintain the path surface. If the Parish Council are agreeable to take on this responsibility, ECC will draw up a legal agreement for a period of years that states that the Parish Council will take on responsibility for maintaining the path.

A general discussion was held, the consensus was that the Parish Council would be agreeable to taking responsibility on but subject to the terms and conditions of the agreement with ECC; these would need to be reviewed before a final decision is made.

RESOLVED: Clerk to contact BDC and communicate that the Parish Council would be agreeable to taking responsibility of the short path subject to the terms and conditions of the ECC agreement.

23/014 2022-23 National Salary Award Scales

Reported that the National Joint Council for Local Government Services (NJC) have advised that the Local Government Association (LGA) have come to an agreement on the new pay scales and annual leave for 2022-23 to be implemented from 1st April 2022. (report circa).

RESOLVED that the revised pay awards annual leave entitlement for the Parish Clerk be implemented and backdated from the 1st April 2022. All in favour

- 23/015 Budget/Precept 2023/24**
Budget/Precept Proposal for 2023/24 prepared by the Finance Working Group (Rpt circa). A General discussion was held on the proposed budget/precept and the 3 options put forward. Council finances were under pressure due to Inflation (above 10%), a reduction in grants/surpluses from Braintree District Council of £1,097; additional commitments for 2023/24 included Reading Room hire for the continuation of Post Office Services in the village £980, maintenance of Bowtells Meadow when transferred to the Parish Council an additional £1,000 (annual fees for grass cutting the meadow are estimated at £4k with £3k contribution met from S106 funds), increased costs for grass cutting/footpaths/tree works, Local Government pay offer uprated to 4.04% and a reduction in events (Kings Coronation event would need to be met from any underspend 2022/23 or from reserves) and reduction in pest control. The Clerk reported that the Council Tax Base had increased from £628.83 in 2022/23 to £658.22 2023/24 due to the increase in dwellings. Councillors proposed Option 2 with a precept of £53,296, which represented the Parish element of the Council Tax Band D Annual Charge of £80.97 (a rise of £2.43 from 2022/23, the equivalent of 6 pints of milk).
RESOLVED that the precept for 2023/24 be set at £50,296. All in favour
- 23/016 Clerks Report**
Councillors reviewed report, no actions to report. (Rpt circa).
 - Finger post on Bridge Street still needs repairing.
 - Signs at the Recreation Ground
 - Leaf Clearance
Chairman to contact Handyman.
- 23/017 To approve the monthly invoices and accounts due for payment (Rpt circa).**
The Clerk presented the list of payments. **RESOLVED: that payments be approved of £9513.64. All in favour.** Cllrs Rawlinson and Burrows signed the Accounts for Payment.
- 23/018 Receipts and Payments for the period ending 31st December 2022 (Rpt circa.).**
The Clerk presented the Receipts and Payments report. There were no queries or comments **RESOLVED: That the report be approved. All in favour.**
- 23/019 Information Exchange/Communication Received/Next Agenda Items Only**
 - Village maintenance/improvement areas
 - King's Coronation Event
 - Winter Salt/Salt Spreader/Salt Bin Review required. Request received from Whitlock Drive resident requesting additional salt bins. ECC Salt Bin criteria: bin would need to be located on a steep incline with a gradient greater than 5% for a minimum length of 50m OR on a sharp bend radius less than 500m with a speed limit greater than 30mph and; the bin should not be located within 200 metres of another salt bin (by walking distance, not as the crow flies). Salt Spreader needs replacing, hole in the bottom.
- 23/020 The next meeting of the Parish Council will be held on Thursday 2nd February 2023 at 7.30 pm, Reading Room.**

Meeting closed at 9.15pm

Future Meeting Dates:

- Thursday 2nd March 2023
- Thursday 6th April 2023
- Thursday 11th May