



STEEPLE BUMPSTEAD PARISH COUNCIL VIRTUAL MEETING

ON Thursday 10th December 2020 at 7.30pm

MINUTES

Chairman: Cllr Kerry Barnes (Chairman)

Present: Cllr Girvan (Vice Chair), Cllr Hill, Cllr Mackenzie, Cllr Fellows, Cllr Westrope, Cllr Irwin, Cllr Rust & Cllr Borges

In attendance: Cllr Diana Garrod, Cllr David Finch

Parish Clerk: Julia Howard

Members of the public: none

- 20/122** Welcome and Apologies – none
- 20/123** Declarations of Interest - none
- 20/124** Minutes of the last meeting (previously circulated) – edit to section 20/016 ITEM 2 remove reference to a seating area. Cllr Rust proposed to accept these as a true account, Cllr Mackenzie Seconded. All were in agreement.
- 20/125** Question Time - none
- 20/126** District Councilor's Report – see attached appendix 1.
Information about changing information on Tier 2 and business grants leading up to Christmas and the New Year.
Further discussion on the increase Covid-19 infection levels, and significantly so in some areas. The Braintree Ward is faring reasonably well in the County, however the overall figures are worryingly high.
- 20/127** County Councilor's Report – See attached appendix 2.
A number of schools have gone to distanced learning. There is an increase in infections in those aged 10-17.
It is expected that a decision on tiering would come after the Christmas break when figures can be re-assessed.
ECC are planting 375,000 trees across Essex in the next 3 years. ECC are seeking advice on tackling climate change and becoming a greener County. Implementing cycleways, making extensions to school buildings carbon neutral, running a major program of changing streetlights over to LED lighting. ECC are experimenting with e-scooters in Chelmsford to see how effective they are. The first e-charging station has opened this week.
2021/22 budget, very mindful that there has been a drop in revenue from Council Tax and business rates. When Furlough ends in March we may see a further drop in employment.
North road footpath, this is now with the Braintree LHP, awaiting an update.
SPBC has been planting new trees and has installed 27 LED lights recently and has been working on the flood scheme. Cllr Finch can offer more trees to Steeple Bumpstead.
Further discussion about the prospective Catesby development of 5000 in Haverhill area bordering on Essex.
- 20/128** Budget – a spreadsheet and PowerPoint presentation were shared as an aid to walk through budget setting.
Further discussion about increasing precept in line with inflation by 1% or not increasing this year as it has been financially difficult for many people. Clerk to prepare precept document for submission to BDC in January.
Cllr Hill proposed to accept the prepared budget, Cllr Fellows seconded. All in agreement.
- 20/129** Election of Officers, Cllr Fellows proposed that Kerry and Sophia continue as Chair and Vice Chair until the scheduled annual meeting in June 2021, Cllr Borges seconded, all in agreement.
- 20/130** Open Spaces, Highways and Lighting
ITEM 1. Boxing Day Walk – With Covid-19 in mind Cllr Rust has been considering ways in which to still arrange the Boxing Day walk. 4 options were considered. The PC are in agreement that arranging any form of Social Gathering isn't sensible, especially as the District may be moving to tier 3 if numbers keep rising. Cllr Rust suggests creating some guided walk maps which can be accessed online and from the village shop, with advice to follow the



COVID-19 guidelines according to the tier we are in at the point. All Cllr's agreed with this being the best option.

ITEM 2. Footpaths, Signs & Bridges – damaged footpath bridge reported last time was repaired by Cllr Rust. The additional report of the bridge bordering Helions Bumpstead has been checked and requires repair, Cllr Rust has been in touch with Shirley Anglin and the Clerk has spoken to the Helions Bumpstead Clerk. Cllr Rust & Hill are happy to make a repair to the bridge but do not think the PC should pay for this, Clerk will try to ask for reimbursement (estimated to cost around £120 just for the 3 planks). Cllr Rust to proceed with this. Cllr Rust has made further headway with the footpaths and signage.

ITEM 3. Camping Close update – repairs to the Camping Close by Playdale is complete, however they identified a further 4 uprights would benefit from being replaced and have quoted ~£1800 (the operatives dug down a long way to identify the damage). Cllr Mackenzie to refer to the ROSPA report to determine when these will need to be done.

Play Bark was received and spread, a further 12 bags are required, however sensible to repair the equipment first. Thomas continues to rake the bark.

ITEM 4. Bins at the Village Hall – it has been reported that there has been some broken glass around the bins, the PC will consider adding this to the Handyman's additional duties as it will be very occasional. The Clerk will procure a dustpan and brush for the task.

ITEM 5 – Salt – winter service- Two salt bins have been located and refilled. A third bin is missing. Residents are able to use this salt for the road and pathway outside their property – it shouldn't be used for private property but for the public highway. Clerk and Chair to post this on social media.

ITEM 6 – Speeding Vehicles / Speed watch update – Speedwatch has paused due to Covid and the need of new volunteers. The PC has also received a report of vehicle damage due to speeding vehicles, and consideration of getting a traffic survey done again. The PC have had this done in the past, but wasn't beneficial. Any changes will only happen if the average speed is high, it doesn't take account of the few fast vehicles.

ITEM 7 – Lay-by project – this project was put on hold but Cllr Westrope has been in contact to progress this. Cllr Westrope to report progress at a future meeting.

ITEM 8 – Lighting update – following a number of power surges, all the lights in SPBC had faults, either staying on or not coming on at all. Clerk is awaiting an update from A&J but the lights appear to have been fixed.

20/131

Planning Applications / Decisions – Cllr Jon Borges

20/02069/COUPA Upper House Farmhouse, Sturmer Rd – No action

20/02016/HH 25 Blois Road – No objection

Consultation period ends on 22/12/2020 for building along the Bypas from Moon Hall along to the B1057 junction. Whilst this isn't in Steeple Bumpstead it is very close; it is right on the Essex / Suffolk (Haverhill area). No planning permission has been applied for as yet.

20/132

Finance and Administration -

ITEM 1. Clerks Report (see appendix 3)–Cllr Westrope proposed to accept the clerks report, Cllr Mackenzie seconded this, all voted unanimously in agreement.

ITEM 2. Audit Update – All complete, notice posted and PC are happy for this to be posted for 60days.

ITEM 3. Website – work will continue on this in the coming months.

ITEM 4. New Working Group – Community Engagement and Social Media – to include Chairman, Clerk, Cllr Irwin and Cllr Rust. This working group will look at improving how the PC share information and integrate with the local community.

ITEM 5. Cleaning of the Moot Hall – this has been paused whilst the PC are not using the Hall and with the likelihood of a further lockdown. The library continues to use the hall while tiering allows this and will advise whether there are any areas that need attention over the next couple of months.

Discussion around this led to the employment status of Mrs Thorn, employment law and alternative mutually agreeable options for this. There has been much discussion on the matter in the past few months and longer, the Cleaner isn't formally employed by the Parish Council, although the PC have requested this. The Clerk has therefore contacted the EALC to clarify some options and requirements as a PC, specifically around the payments to the cleaner. Further investigation into whether this can be the responsibility of the Moot Hall



trustees and rolled up in a single payment (either annually or twice-yearly) to include the upkeep and use of the Moot Hall for the regular monthly meetings (additional meetings subject to an additional fee). This will be addressed at a later meeting.

20/133

Information Sharing

Clr Mack – lack of FLOOD warning signage
 Clr Fellows – Yellow Book link is now on the SB Facebook pages, Clr Girvan – business address on google more difficult to change than expected. Clr Rust – none, Clr Hill- none, Clr Westrope- none, Clr Borges - none.
 Chairman – thanks all the Councillors

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Next Meeting – Thursday 14th January 2021, 7.30pm Zoom Call

20/135

Meeting Close – 22.22pm

Actions:

Action 1	20/128 Prepare precept paperwork	Clerk
Action 2	20/130 Item2 – proceed with repairs to the damaged foot bridge	Clr Rust
Action 3	20/130 Item3 – Refer to the ROSPA report and assess when further identified repairs need to be done / budgeted for. And whether to purchase additional play bark in the meantime	Clr Mackenzie
Action 4	20/130 Item4 – purchase a dustpan and brush for the Handyman to clear broken glass on occasion	Clerk
Action 5	20/130 Item 5 – salt is available to be used on public highways, to be shared on social media	Chairman & Clerk
Action 6	20/132 Item 4 – set up new working group & TOR	Clerk

Appendix 1 – District Councillor report

District Councillor's Report December 2020 to Parish Councils (Clr. Diana Garrod - Bumpstead Ward)

Local Temporary Traffic Regulation Orders The intended closure of Camps Road, Helions Bumpstead due to commence on 2nd December 2020 for 7 days. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while County Broadband undertakes installation of fibre broadband.

The intended closure of Sages End Road, due to commence on 9th December 2020 for 9 days. The closure is require for the safety of the public and workforce while County Broadband Ltd undertakes superfast fibre optic broadband installation.

Intended closure of Kedington Road, Sturmer due to commence on 16th December 2020 for 15 hours. The closure is required for the safety of the public and workforce while BT undertakes pole testing.

Finchingfield Guildhall

Finchingfield Guildhall receives recognition as the government awards the heritage site £22,800 to protect its future. The Guildhall has an important place in the heritage of Finchingfield and among the historic Essex Guildhalls. The building was built around 1470 to house a guild of priests and to provide a schoolroom for the boys of the village. The guild room has been used as a place of learning for more than five centuries. This heritage site, along with many other heritage and cultural sites, has suffered a significant decline in income due to the COVID-19 lockdowns and restrictions. The Finchingfield Guildhall Charitable Organisation will use the money to meet ongoing costs and repairs in order to preserve and maintain the building as a hub for community activities. The funding will also allow the trust to protect the library and museum, support local events and introduce new digital initiatives. The Guildhall is among 162 organisations across all four nations to have received a lifeline grant from the £1.57 billion Culture Recovery Fund and among 516 organisations in the Braintree District to have received a grant from the £9.28 million Cash for Retail, Hospitality and Leisure Fund.

Partnership Planting Marks National Tree Week in Essex

More than 14,000 trees are due to be planted at a site in Chelmer Valley, Chelmsford this National Tree Week as part of a collaborative effort between Essex County Council's (ECC) Essex Forest Initiative, The Woodland Trust and Ground Control's Evergreen Fund.



The Essex Forest Initiative is ECC's commitment to planting 375,000 trees - £1million worth - over five years in order to tackle climate change and lock up 60,000 tonnes of carbon. It is part of wider efforts being undertaken by the county council to reduce carbon emissions and promote green infrastructure across Essex. National Tree Week runs between 28 November until 6 December and ECC has formed a partnership with conservation charity, The Woodland Trust and landscaping specialists, Ground Control, to carry out planting at this site. The Woodland Trust is supplying the majority of the 14,110 trees and Ground Control is undertaking the planting which is being funded by their charitable arm, the Evergreen Fund. The planting at Chelmer Valley is the first large-scale planting under the initiative and a celebration of the partnership between the three organisations.

Further planting is scheduled to take place during tree planting season (November-March) at Essex Country Parks and other sites across the county, and ECC is set to meet its target of 25,000 trees planted in the first year of the Essex Forest Initiative.

Planning for Year 2 of the Essex Forest Initiative is also in progress, with key sites identified for planting. Any organisations or individuals who wish to find out more about the initiative or who thinks they may have land suitable for planting are encouraged to contact environment@essex.gov.uk.

To stay up-to-date with the latest Essex Forest Initiative news and progress, residents and organisations are encouraged to follow EssexForest on Facebook.

[E-Scooter Trial Plans for Essex, Including a Hire Trial Braintree](#)

In the spring / summer of 2020, the Department for Transport announced a proposal to trial the use of electric scooters in named pilot areas. Essex County Council, with the support of the districts, drafted proposals for Basildon, Braintree, Brentwood, Clacton, Chelmsford and Colchester. ECC then identified a preferred supplier – Spin – and submitted these proposals to the DfT. We can therefore announce that safe scooting is coming to Essex as managed pilot trials of e-scooter travel in six locations across the county have a green light to go ahead. Essex County Council, working with Essex commercial partner Spin and district, borough and city councils and Essex Police is leading on the electric scooter, popularly known as escooter, trials as part of its Safer, Greener, Healthier transport campaign. With pilot approval from the Department of Transport now obtained, and final conversations with the six district, borough and city councils underway, the innovative Essex trials will hopefully see Spin, a company owned by Ford, provide and manage an e-scooter rental system in defined areas of Basildon, Braintree, Brentwood, Clacton, Chelmsford and Colchester. These trials will start small scale and be constantly evaluated before any expansion takes place. Essex County Council will have strong feedback channels and be monitoring and adjusting each pilot trial as time progresses.

We would like to assure residents that safety is of the utmost importance in these trials and Essex County Council, Essex Police and all partners from district, city and borough councils are committed to ensuring the safety of all road-users. Essex Police will continue to enforce the law relating to the operation of escooters. E-scooters are NOT currently legal in Essex or London (despite what you may see).

[Covid-19 and Restrictions](#)

Public Health England report on weekly case rates. This is based on the number of cases recorded in the preceding seven days per 100,000 population. Case rates allow for comparison between areas and give a clearer indication of the trend in Covid-19 cases, removing day-to-day volatility in daily case numbers. As at 19/11/20, the highest weekly case rates were in Basildon and Brentwood, with rates of 268.7 and 245.5 respectively. Braintree 120.6 (up from 94.4 at 12/11/20), Chelmsford 131.7 (up from 123.3), Colchester 77.6 (down from 95.0), Uttlesford 108.4 (down from 156.6), Essex 151.7 (down from 141.2).

Since Sturmer is located on the border with Suffolk, I can also advise that Covid cases per 100,000 people in the seven days to November 22nd were: West Suffolk 60.9, Mid Suffolk 57.8, Ipswich is 161.4 (up from 86.2 at 15/11/20); so a spike in Ipswich.

On Thursday 6th November the Prime Minister announced that from 2nd December, when the current lockdown lifts, the majority of the country, including Essex, will be placed under new, strengthened Tier 2 restrictions after lockdown. This is for areas with a higher or rapidly rising level of infections, where some additional restrictions need to be in place in order to prevent a return to growing infections. We know that social contact spreads the virus.

In Tier 2:

- you must not socialise with anyone you do not live with or who is not in your support bubble in any indoor setting, whether at home or in a public place
- you must not socialise in a group of more than 6 people outside, including in a garden or a public space – this is called the 'rule of 6'



businesses and venues can continue to operate, in a COVID-Secure manner, other than those which remain closed by law, such as nightclubs

- pubs and bars must close, unless operating as restaurants. Hospitality venues can only serve alcohol with substantial meals
- hospitality businesses selling food or drink for consumption on their premises are required to: provide table service only, in premises which sell alcohol, close between 11pm and 5am (hospitality venues in airports, ports, transport services and motorway service areas are exempt) and must stop taking orders after 10pm
- hospitality businesses and venues selling food and drink for consumption off the premises can continue to do so after 10pm as long as this is through delivery service, click-and-collect or drivethrough
- early closure (11pm) applies to casinos, cinemas, theatres, museums, bowling alleys, amusement arcades, funfairs, theme parks, adventure parks and activities, and bingo halls. Cinemas, theatres and concert halls can stay open beyond 11pm in order to conclude performances that start before 10pm
- public attendance at outdoor and indoor events (performances and shows) is permitted, limited to whichever is lower:
50% capacity, or either 2,000 people outdoors or 1,000 people indoors
- public attendance at spectator sport and business events can resume inside and outside, subject to social contact rules and limited to whichever is lower: 50% capacity, or either 2,000 people outdoors or 1,000 people indoors
- places of worship remain open but you must not socialise with people from outside of your household or support bubble while you are indoors there, unless a legal exemption applies
- weddings and funerals can go ahead with restrictions on numbers of attendees – 15 people can attend wedding ceremonies and receptions, 30 people can attend funeral ceremonies, and 15 people can attend linked commemorative events such as wakes or stone settings.
- organised outdoor sport, and physical activity and exercise classes can continue
- organised indoor sport, physical activity and exercise classes will only be permitted if it is possible for people to avoid mixing with people they do not live with (or share a support bubble with). There are exceptions for indoor disability sport, sport for educational purposes and supervised sport and physical activity for under-18s, which can take place with larger groups mixing
- you can continue to travel to venues or amenities which are open, but should aim to reduce the number of journeys you make where possible
- if you live in a tier 2 area, you must continue to follow tier 2 rules when you travel to a tier 1 area. Avoid travel to or overnight stays in tier 3 areas other than where necessary, such as for work, education, youth services, to receive medical treatment, or because of caring responsibilities. You can travel through a tier 3 area as a part of a longer journey
- for international travel see the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office travel advice for your destination and the travel corridors list.

You can see the latest data for the Braintree District here: www.essex.gov.uk/local-outbreak-controlplan/data-cases-in-esssexby-district

What about Christmas? Between 23-27th December you can form an exclusive 'Christmas bubble' composed of people from no more than three households

- you can only be in one Christmas bubble
 - you cannot change your Christmas bubble
 - you can travel between tiers and UK nations for the purposes of meeting your Christmas bubble
 - you can only meet your Christmas bubble in private homes or in your garden, places of worship, or public outdoor spaces
 - you can continue to meet people who are not in your Christmas bubble outside your home according to the rules in the tier where you are staying
- you cannot meet someone in a private dwelling who is not part of your household or Christmas bubble
- When following these new rules, we must each continue to take personal responsibility to limit the spread of the virus.*



Business Grants

As I write this, there are various business grants available and due to recent announcements, I would expect these to change. The government has announced a range of advice and support measures for employers and businesses over the past few months. You can find full details of these and any new information at www.gov.uk.

An additional £3 million in financial support is available to help businesses impacted by the national lockdown arrangements. The application process for the 'Additional Restrictions' grant scheme, introduced by government to support businesses, is now open. This grant scheme seeks to help businesses who have been able to trade, but have been severely affected by the restrictions, regardless of whether they pay business rates or not. The scheme will award eligible businesses up to £3,000 in support based on their size and the extent of their fixed costs. Grants of up to £10,000 will also be available in exceptional circumstances to businesses supporting important sectors of the local economy.

Market traders, taxi firms, businesses operating from home, companies in shared work spaces and those in the events sector are amongst the businesses which will have the opportunity to apply for this grant, the amount of which is dependent on criteria.

Businesses should visit www.braintree.gov.uk/helpforbusinesses to find out more about the scheme, the criteria and application process.

Braintree District Council opened applications to two grant schemes from a £2.37 million fund last week (17 November) and has so far paid out £709,235 to 474 businesses. I would urge businesses to keep in touch with Braintree District Council by signing up to its business bulletin in order to receive the latest information: www.braintree.gov.uk/tellmemore or by joining its closed group on Facebook – just search for Braintree District Businesses.

Essex County Council has confirmed it will allocate £2.2m of the funding it received when the county entered Tier 2 restrictions to allow local businesses to make adaptations to their premises and/or operations. This is in addition to the £29m in business support funding allocated directly to district, borough and city councils. Feedback from businesses, and in particular the hospitality and leisure sectors along with other local businesses who have been most affected, has been that they want a quick, simple, targeted and consistent approach to be taken in releasing grant funding.

ECC will distribute the £2.2m to district, borough and City Councils so that they can administer a streamlined grant scheme to support local businesses who are impacted by the COVID restrictions. Businesses will need to apply for the grants via their local district, borough or city council websites, from 23rd November onwards. Businesses are advised to check their local district council website. A further £2.2m which the council received as part of the Tier 2 restrictions funding was allocated to welfare support for the county's most vulnerable residents.

The grants will address the hardship many businesses have faced as they have either had to close or who have been able to trade but have been severely affected by the restrictions, regardless of whether they pay business rates or not. The ECC funding will allow businesses to adapt their businesses to generate income while restrictions remain in place so they are able to reopen when they are removed. The County Council has also relaxed highways restrictions on businesses adapting outdoor areas across the ECC area. The ECC funding will award eligible businesses up to £1,500 for adaptations, in addition to the £3,000 in support available from district councils based on their size, their sector and the degree of loss or hardship. Businesses should apply via Braintree District Council's website.

Cllr. Diana Garrod

District Councillor - Bumpstead Ward



Appendix 2 – County Councillor Update

Parish Update December 2020 COVID On 2 December we left lockdown and Essex as a whole moved into Tier 2. Since then, while numbers have dropped in the north of the county, there is a steady rise in cases in the south. Particularly of concern is Basildon. As a result the case numbers for the whole county have not decreased and it is very unlikely that on 16 December Government will move Essex into Tier 1. It remains to be seen if Government will look at the county as a whole or if they will look at individual districts when allocating Tiers.

The vaccine is beginning to be rolled out across the country, but not in vast quantities and targeted at high risk areas such as health care workers and the vulnerable first. In Essex we are also rolling out Lateral Flow Tests, which only take 30 minutes for a result. We are targeting these in high infection areas, starting in Basildon, and are encouraging all residents to get this test, regardless of whether they have symptoms. Finally, we have invested £1.6m in further improving our contact tracing system, ensuring that people who have tested positive and their contacts will be contacted at a higher rate of success, and much sooner.

Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR) On 25 November the Chancellor has now unveiled the government's spending plans for the coming year, detailing the money government departments will get for core services such as the NHS, education, roads, and police. As we already knew, this CSR was stripped back from a multi-year to single year settlement due to the economic challenges the COVID pandemic has created. For social care this means the continuation of the Government's £1bn social care grant (£23m for ECC), with around £7.4m more for ECC from a new £300m pot for adults and children's.

There is also the option for an additional 3% social care precept which ECC could levy should it choose, which would mean £21m. Government also announced a £1.7 billion for potholes and £300m for innovation in bus services. There was also £3bn of additional support around COVID-19, we're expecting an emergency grant of around £29m for ECC as well funding to support people at greatest need with Council Tax relief. The full Spending Review documents can be accessed here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/spending-review-2020-documents>

Essex Climate Action Commission We announced the Essex Climate Action Commission in October last year to help us achieve our ambitions on reducing carbon emissions. In the meantime we have been continuing to develop our ambitions around tackling climate change, including three net zero schools expansions, including heat pumps in Essex Housing developments and planting the first 25,000 trees of the 375,000 of the Essex Forest Initiative. The independent Commission produced its Interim Report last month which includes a raft of recommendations for the County Council and partners, which are being assessed for implementation.

The report can be reviewed here: <https://www.essex.gov.uk/news/essexclimate-action-commission-publishes-interim-report>

School sites are Carbon Neutral and we're exploring heat pumps in Essex Housing as well



Appendix 3 Clerks Report



CLERKS REPORT – 10th November 2020 – 9th December 2020

Receipts		Payments	
November 2020			
		EON	£52.01
		Mrs Thorn - cleaner	£226.72
		NEST	£23.23
		K Barnes - Rake	£35.99
		VIKING	£36.32
		K Barnes – zoom	£65.71
		Handyman wages	£86.64
		J Howard – website	£145.70
		Clerks Wages	£722.76
		Country Gardens	£2166.00
Sub-total	£0		£ 3,561.08
December 2020			
Bank Interest	£1.11		
Sub-total	£1.11		£0
TOTALS	£1.11		£3,561.08

Payments / Invoices pending:

November

- £10 SBNN phone bill (awaiting authorisation)
- £50 British Legion (cheque sent)

December

- £10 SBNN phone bill
- £722.76 Clerks Salary
- £86.64 Handyman Wages
- £84.00 New Clerk's course
- £3,035.62 ~~Playdale~~ repairs
- £558.00 Country gardens additional works
- £122.40 Website renewal
- £360.00 PKF Littlejohn – Audit
- £90 EALC – Planning Training / Cllr Irwin

These payments are pending/ awaiting approval

Balances as at 09/12/20

Current Account:	£23,133.23
Savings Account:	£38,767.68
Savings Account*:	£ 5,660.02
Total	£67,560.93

- *Earmarked Reserves: £4,218.97 – War memorial
- £ 521.95 – Neighbourhood Plan grant
- £ 920.00 – Steeple Bumpstead Neighbourhood Network