

GREAT GRANSDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 1st June 2015

Those present were:

Stephanie Beaumont Chairman

Ian Selkirk Vice Chairman

Diane Taylor Clerk

Ann Cosgrave Parish Councillor

Michael Capps Parish Councillor

Andrew Pett Parish Councillor

Jeff Gorton Parish Councillor

Debi Pearce Parish Councillor

Alan Rowbotham Parish Councillor

District Councillor Barbara Boddington, District Councillor Richard West

County Councillor Julie Wisson and 1 member of the public

1. The meeting was opened at 7.30 pm with a silent prayer.

2. **Apologies.** Apologies were received from Parish Councillor George Craze.

3. **Declarations of Interest.**

11. Code of Conduct: Debi Pearce declared an interest as she was applying for a dispensation under the Code of Conduct.

4. **Election of Vice Chairman.** The chairman invited nominations. It was proposed by Andrew Pett, seconded by Michael Capps and carried unanimously that **Ian Selkirk** be elected vice chairman.

5. **Minutes** of the previous monthly meeting held on 12th May 2015, which had been circulated, were approved and accordingly signed by the chairman.

6. **OPEN FORUM.** The meeting was closed for twenty minutes and members of the public were invited to speak. Councillor Julie Wisson welcomed all councillors following the recent election. She spoke about the Boundary Commission which is slashing this division in half and equalising electoral numbers across the divisions. The number of councillors will reduce from 69 to 61. Buckden and the Offords will move to the Brampton division with the villages of Great Gransden, Waresley, Abbotsley, Yelling, Toseland and Great Paxton being joined with Loves Farm, to be known as St Neots East and Gransden, leaving room for future development in a few years. The division will be predominantly urban with a few villages. Councillor Wisson also confirmed that the £1 car parking fee originally introduced at the Park & Ride sites will be extended to the 2 guided bus car parks. Councillor Barbara Boddington reported that she had arranged to meet businesses on the industrial sites to discuss the routes of HGVs. She will be accompanied by Councillor Richard West and both will also be meeting the Leader of HDC about the proposed boundary changes to fully understand the changes, both advantages and disadvantages. Councillors asked about the proposed boundary changes and whether concerns had also been voiced by neighbouring villages being joined with Loves Farm. Councillor Wisson commented that Loves Farm is a community association which doesn't carry the same weight as a Parish Council. Any individual can comment on the consultation and add their views. County divisions are not looked at with wards, as the division is based on electoral numbers. Councillors commented that there are rational arguments to support continued ruralisation including local development and community interests to promote effective and convenient local government. Any representation may be more effective if villages join together to make their views known. Following administration changes at HDC, Councillor West has been elected vice chairman of the District Council. He confirmed that he will be attending the councillors' seminar arranged by Luminus and expressed the view that Luminus should be working closer with parish councils.

7. Matters Arising: 7.1. Mill Weir Lay-by. The clerk had sought further information from Highways about the installation of plastic grasscrete in the lay-by but no further response has been received. Clerk to follow this up.

7.2. Meadow Road Verges. Colin Lindsay of Anglian Water had met with CCC to discuss the parish council's list of repairs following the water pipe replacement work. The chairman commented that the stretch of road which was not walked during the site meeting with Colin Lindsay is the length of road that has been discounted for repair. The verge directly opposite each patch of road dug up requires repair. Responsibility for the repairs has mostly been off loaded onto Highways. The damage to the kerb stone outside Dancers Cottage was due to the pipe replacement work although Anglian Water is now denying this. Clerk to raise these matters.

7.3. Internal Auditor's Report. Councillors considered the internal auditor's report and each of the matters raised. Councillors agreed to seek further advice on the need to keep a Register of Purchased Graves as pointed out in the internal audit, particularly as the purchase of graves is already registered.

7.4. Safeguarding Policy. The policy had been circulated. Councillors agreed no changes were necessary. Andrew Pett was appointed Safeguarding Officer.

7.5. Parish Council Website. Debi Pearce agreed to take over management of the website from Phil Taylor.

7.6. Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator. The chairman read out the letter from Des Merrill, resigning as co-ordinator of Neighbourhood Watch. During the past 2 years nothing has been reported to him from members of the public about crime in the village. Many of the street co-ordinators have left the village and there are much more up to date methods of communicating information about crime in the village such as e-cops and Touchbase. Many people don't report crime due to insurance problems. Councillors commented that many villagers do communicate with their neighbours and whilst there may no longer be a need for a traditional co-ordinator, it is important to have a means for communicating relevant information. Many villagers use Touchbase and villagers should be encouraged to sign up to e-cops. Debi Pearce suggested the use of Facebook as an effective and quick method of passing on information. Councillors agreed there should be as many ways as possible for passing on information. Details of how to sign up for e-cops will be put in Roundabout, the noticeboard and on Touchbase.

7.7. Gransden Windmill. CCC had responded to councillors' request for an update. Quinton Carroll had emailed advising that the millwright has been ill so the final parts of the securing works have not yet been done.

8. Neighbourhood Watch. On behalf of Desmond Merrill, the chairman read the report that is filed hereafter as Appendix No.1.

9. Reading Room Cottage Insurance 2015/16. The papers had been circulated. Councillors agreed the sum assured of £288,054 and noted the 1.8% increase in the renewal premium, up £7.36 to £413.79. Councillors agreed to renew the policy.

10. Sportsfield Trustees. Phil Taylor, chairman of GSRA has asked the Parish Council to be the trustees as the 3 existing trustees no longer have any involvement with the Sportsfield and are currently not appropriate. The clerk is obtaining further information and advice and councillors agreed to defer the matter to the next meeting.

11. Code of Conduct. Debi Pearce left the hall. Councillors considered the application for a dispensation to enable Debi Pearce to vote on matters relating to Gransden allotments for a period of 4 years. Jeff Gorton proposed the dispensation be granted with voting rights, seconded by Ann Cosgrave and carried unanimously.

12. Financial Statement for May 2015. The sheet filed as Appendix No.2 had been circulated. The statement was unanimously approved and signed by the Chairman.

13. Cheques for approval. Councillors approved for payment the 8 invoices as listed on the sheet and filed as Appendix No. 3.

14. Highways. Andrew Pett commented that prior to top dressing Waresley Road the holes were not filled first. The potholes were marked prior to the surface dressing. Councillor Wisson agreed to pass on the complaint about the standard of the work. Michael Capps pointed out that the area behind the trees in front of the vicarage needs cutting during the next village grass cutting this month. Clerk to circulate the grass cutting map to councillors.

Jeff Gorton commented that Highways had closed the report about the poor state of Crow Tree Street footpath. The camber on the path makes it dangerous, the surface is breaking up and the bottom of the bank is being eroded by heavy rain. He agreed to take photos as a record. Stephanie Beaumont pointed out that Highways had suggested a railing but were not willing to bear the cost. Councillors will consider an application under the Local Highways Initiative later in the year when applications are invited. Alan Rowbotham spoke about the lorries coming up onto the pavement when driving through the village.

Councillors noted that the pothole in the middle of Gransden Road, Caxton had at last been repaired and the drain cover in Caxton Road has been marked for repair.

15. CORRESPONDENCE. 15.1. Councillors noted the availability of training courses proved by Capalc and the Annual Conference for councillors provided by RTPI East of England.

15.2. Electoral Review of Cambridgeshire. Several councillors had voiced their opinion about the proposed boundary changes directly to the Boundary Commission. Councillors noted the guidance and commented that the divisions are based on electoral numbers whereas no account has been taken of community interests and identities by grouping Great Gransden with Loves Farm. The chairman commented that St Neots should be divided into 4 divisions, 2 for St Neots town and one each for villages to the north and south of the town, preserving the number of divisions for the St Neots area. Councillors agreed clerk to contact the village parish councils affected by the proposed changes with a view to making a collective representation to the Boundary Commission. Details will be put on Touchbase, in Roundabout and the noticeboard informing residents of the proposals and urging them to make representations.

15.3. Travel for Cambridge. Councillors agreed to assist where possible with providing information which had been requested from Richard Hampton, Travel Plan Advisor, working with businesses across Cambridgeshire to promote sustainable travel.

15.4. Invitation from Luminus to a councillor's seminar on 8th June. Ian Selkirk agreed to attend.

15.5. Request from Each for a financial donation. This was declined as the Parish Council does not make charitable donations.

15.6. Alan Rowbotham raised the issue of speeding traffic through the village. The police have previously been asked to carry out speed checks which was not successful as the police came at an inappropriate time of day during the school summer holidays when the village was quiet. Clerk to make a further request. Councillors discussed Speedwatch, the chairman outlining the previous attempt to encourage villagers to volunteer and the lack of support resulting in the scheme folding in the village. Note to be put in Roundabout to generate support.

Correspondence – continued:

15.7. Concern was expressed about the HGVs through the village. Businesses have been asked to direct their drivers not to drive through the village but many rely on GPS systems which send them through the village. Our district councillors have already agreed to visit the businesses on the industrial sites which may result in an improvement.

15.8. Councillors noted the invitation to the Affordable Housing Tour from Cambridgeshire Acre.

15.9. Play Equipment. Alan Rowbotham commented on the condition of the play train in the playing field. This is due to be re-varnished. The village tennis court is in need of some work; either the net post needs straightening or the net taken down to allow the area to be used for other activities. Councillors agreed to look at this when the precept is considered later in the year. The provision of a skate park was raised. This has not been discussed by the Parish Council and any grant applications are being looked into by individual residents.

The Next Meeting has been arranged for Monday 6th July 2015

This meeting closed at 9.33pm