

GREAT GRANSDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 2nd March 2020

Those present were:

Andrew Pett Chairman
 Giles Scott Vice Chairman
 Catherine Fox Clerk
 Peter King Parish Councillor
 Nigel Day Parish Councillor

Lisbeth Ricciardi Parish Councillor
 Michael Capps Parish Councillor
 Jeff Gorton Parish Councillor
 James Catmur Parish Councillor

District Councillor Richard West,
 and 3 members of the public

1. The meeting was opened at 7:30pm with a silent prayer.

2. Apologies. Apologies were received from Councillor Wisson.

3. Declarations of Interest. There were no declarations of interest.

4. Minutes of the previous monthly meeting held on 3rd February 2020 and also of the Special Planning Meeting on 17th February 2020, were approved and accordingly signed by the chairman.

5. OPEN FORUM. The meeting was closed for fifteen minutes. District Councillor Richard West updated the Parish Council on recent information from the District council. The 2020/21 budget had been approved after recorded vote at a meeting held on Wednesday 26th February. It had been noted in the budget that *'the budget proposed for 2020/2021 should not give members and significant concerns over the councils financial position'*

Cllr West also commented that on the medium term strategy (2021/2022 to 2024/2025) the financial Officer had written *'Over the past few years the Council has taken proactive action to address its budgetary concerns and ,with the planned continuation of its transformation programme and its intention to further commercialise services, the council has a sound financial base upon which it can further develop its aim of financial self-sufficiency'*.

Cllr West reported that he had attended the East West Rail Community Event held at Little Gransden Village Hall on 29th February 2020. During the event Cllr West had highlighted, through discussion with Steve Yates, that local landowners and local residents on the frontline must work together to achieve the ambitious environmental targets set.

A village resident enquired if there had been any response received in relation to the Sand Road planning application following on from the Planning Meeting on 17th February 2020. Cllr Pett confirmed that at the time of the meeting there had not been any further correspondence. The closing date for comments had been 26th February and therefore a formal response was not expected yet. Cllr Pett felt that the decision would not be made quickly and with over 30 comments/objections on the planning portal, the Parish Council believe that the decision should be referred back to the DMC.

A letter was read out on behalf of a resident seeking approval of a planning application. This will be covered as item 15.2 on the agenda. The content and comments of the applicant were noted.

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6. Matters Arising:

6.1. Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP). Cllr Pett reported that the committee were next due to meet on Wednesday 4th March 2020. The NDP had asked that a joint meeting with the Parish Council be arranged so that the NDP committee could present their policies and plans to the Parish Council prior to the production of the final versions. Cllr Pett suggested that this could be done during the Annual Parish Meeting which will be held on 23rd April 2020. This was unanimously agreed. Cllr Gorton suggested that this be advertised through Roundabout.

6.2. Arrangements for VE Day celebrations Cllr Pett had received correspondence from a representative of the Royal British Legion with regards to an event that was planned for Little Gransden Village Hall. It was unanimously agreed that no separate event would be organised for Great Gransden as the event was open to all Gransden residents. Cllr Pett suggested that this event could be a recipient of a Poor's Land Grant – subject to restrictions. Cllr Capps confirmed that the terms of the Poor's Land Charity stipulated that 'any surplus income is to be used for the benefit of residents'. As many of the assets within the village are shared resources (eg Sportsfield, School) supporting the VE day event would be allowable. Cllr Pett will raise this at the next meeting of the Poor's Land Trustees on April 9th 2020.

6.3. Arrangements for Annual Parish Meeting It was agreed that in addition to Councillor Reports, the NDP would be invited to present. A presentation would also be made to Mrs Diane Taylor in recognition of her exemplary service as Clerk.

7. Cemetery Grass Cutting A revised quote had been received from the current provider. (DP Garden Works and Ground Maintenance). Cllr Gorton proposed acceptance, this was seconded by Cllr Ricciardi and unanimously carried.

8 Village Risk Register.

Cllr Catmur reported that the Village Risk Register had no significant changes. Internet connection to the village remains an item as does the financial position of HDC and the possible implications of Brexit. Cllr Catmur commented that the underused bus service must be recognised as a risk. Currently this is subsidised as a bus service by CCC but, if this funding stops, the service is likely to be considered not commercially viable.

Cllr Ginn asked if the School was currently listed on the register. In light of increased building in the village, the school would not be able to cope with the influx of new pupils. It was noted that the school site restricted growth beyond a certain point. Cllr Pett commented that the LA were not aware of new building and therefore were not aware of the potential extent of the problems though the Head Teacher and Governing Body of the School were. It was unanimously agreed that the School be added to the Village Risk Register.

9. Clerk's Financial Statement for February 2020. The sheet filed as Appendix No. 1 had been circulated. The statement was unanimously approved and signed by the chairman. Councillors also noted the budget review as at the end of February 2020.

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10. Cheques for approval. The following payments were approved:

Proposed Cllr Pett, seconded Cllr Capps.

1. Mrs C Fox – clerk’s salary for February 2020	£550.29
2. Mrs C Fox – clerk’s expenses for January 2020	£12.69
3. The Old Cemetery	£130.00
4. Great Gransden PCC	£1600.00
5. Roundabout Contribution	£125.00
6. Mr J Gorton	£9.00
7. Balfour Beatty	£124.20
8. Glasdon UK Ltd	£57.40
9. Mr R McIntosh	£7.50
10. CAPALC	£75.00
11. Richard Baker	£254.96

11. Gransden Sportsfield and Recreational Association (GSRA)

Cllr Ginn reported that the GSRA had not met since the last Parish Council Meeting and so no updates were available. Cllr Scott commented that he had received correspondence from the treasurer of the GSRA asking for details of the Annual Parish Meeting so that they could prepare a report.

12. Highways

Councillors reported no new potholes though the following issues were raised:

12.1 Fox Street/Caxton Road – Cllr Capps commented that the repairs on the pothole on Fox Street/Caxton Road had been poor and had already disintegrated. A better quality of repair is required. Clerk will contact county Highways again.

12.2 Pot holes on Caxton Road Cllr Ricciardi raised the issue of the substantial pot holes that were on Caxton Road. Though not strictly within the village boundary, many residents regularly use this road and so the Clerk will report this to County Highways.

13. Correspondence.

13.1 Village Roundabout (Church Street/Middle Street)

There has been one response to the request for help to maintain this roundabout. Councillors discussed the best way to manage and maintain it. Cllr Scott suggested that the resident who has offered help, specify what it is that they require in order to clear and plant new plants. The costs of this will then be met by the Parish Council (up to a maximum value of £50.00). After the initial clearing and replant of the roundabout, maintenance will be done on a voluntary basis. This was unanimously agreed, Clerk will liaise with volunteer to relay the decisions made.

13.2 Request for support in Principle of development of 6-8 Fox Street Councillors noted the statement from the applicants given in the Open Forum session. Previous consideration to this had been given in July 2019 where

‘Councillors noted the proposals to build above the village shop for security reasons following the recent break in. It was noted the shop extends beyond the length of the attached dwelling, both at the front and back. Whilst appreciating the problem, the viability of the shop and the continued security risks, any such development would affect the neighbouring properties unless it was restricted to part of the existing shop length. Councillors agreed that a development above the shop, in keeping with planning, would not be viewed detrimentally, but such a development across the whole length of the shop would be considered detrimental to neighbours’.

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New supporting documentation had been provided stating that, meetings had been arranged by the applicant to include the architect and immediate neighbours. Evidence that extensive guidance had been sought by the applicant from a pre-planning enquiry was also made available to Councillors. In light of this, the Parish Council were – in principle- satisfied with the proposed plans and intimated that they would look to support the proposal when a full planning application was made.

13.3. Agricole Oil Councillors agreed on the Windmill Trust as this year’s recipient of the £20 award. This was proposed by Cllr Capps, seconded by Cllr Catmur and unanimously carried.

13.4 Price Increase – Buchans A revised quote had been received from Buchans for grass cutting at the Sportsfield. The quote incorporated an increase of 1% (£23.50) for the year. The new quote was considered and unanimously accepted.

13.5 Old Chapel Maintenance Councillors noted an email received from a representative of the Ann Dutton Charity confirming that a volunteer had be found to maintain the Old Chapel Graveyard in West Street. A payment of £130.00 will be made (as agreed April 2019).

13.6 Request for use of Sportsfield A request had been received for use of the sportsfield for early morning fitness groups. The Parish Council has no objections to this in principle though it was considered an issue for the GSRA committee to formally approve. Cllr Ginn will pass on the comments of the Parish Council to the committee. It was noted that there is currently an unrelated commercial fitness class being held every Friday lunchtime on the MUGA, though permission for this had not been sought nor granted from the Parish Council. Concerns were raised around the availability of the MUGA (as a non-bookable provision) and the effects on other parties wishing to use it. Cllr Ginn asked what the insurance implications were for commercial use. As this was unknown, the Clerk will seek advice from the insurers.

13.7 Traffic in Middle Street A village resident had conducted his own survey of traffic using Middle Street and provided the data to the Parish Council. Cllr Catmur commented that though the data was limited to one time on one day, comparisons from the previous year indicated that traffic passing through Middle Street had substantially decreased. Cllr Catmur confirmed that Speedwatch would continue to monitor traffic in the village to ensure that sound, comparable data was available for when the A428 works were completed. It was noted that the number of vehicles caught speeding in the village was lower when traffic levels were higher – caused by vehicles travelling in convoy. It is likely that having fewer vehicles driving through the village will result in a higher number of speeding vehicles being recorded. The Parish Council wished to formally thank the resident for taking the time to conduct his survey and share his findings.

14. Planning.

14.1 1. Planning Permission Consultation – Rectory Farm Church Street Great Gransden (ref 20/00220/LBC) Councillors noted the benefits to the Parish of good and sympathetic repairs to the wall. Cllr Capps proposed ‘**Approval**’ on the grounds that it was required maintenance and renovation of an historic listed building. This was seconded by Cllr Gorton and unanimously carried.

15. AOB

The following points were raised:

15.1 SAND ROAD Development Cllr Capps raised concerns around the entrances to the site being used by the developer. A condition previously imposed stipulates that the developer cannot offload on the main road, and that all loading and offloading must be done on site. There has been a suggestion that the developer proposes to use an additional entrance on Sand Road that has not been authorised. An application has been made for a pound in the neighbouring field (by Landowners permission) though access to this pound is contentious. Cllr Pett will access the

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plans on the Planning Portal and circulate to all Councillors for clarity. The Parish Council has not been asked to formally comment.

15.2 East West Rail Link

Councillors discussed the possible implications of the new East West Rail Link. The initial plans remain quite vague in relation to the proximity of the line to Abbotsley. Cllr West commented that landowners had been contacted and, the pattern of their combined land suggests that a preferred route is being investigated. The chosen corridor has been announced, though the specific route will be subject to further public consultation.

Cllr Ginn explained that the route would not parallel with the improved A428, though councillors suggested that it would possibly bring financial benefits if they were (shared surveys, tests etc). Brief discussions were had around St Neots being a priority for HDC; with considerable growth inevitable due to extensive development. Cllr Scott suggested that a station within walking distance of these new developments would be beneficial.

Further public consultations in relation to the East West Rail Link will be held before the anticipated announcement of the route alignment in 2021/22.

15.3 Vandalism of the MUGA Cllr Pett reported that there had been some vandalism of the MUGA which had resulted in damage to the surface. The children responsible had been identified. Councillors discussed the ways in which this kind of damage could be prevented, with CCTV discussed as a possible deterrent in the future. The MUGA is scheduled to undergo planned maintenance in June. There are other small marks/gauges on the surface that will need to be addressed. It was noted that though some of these may be from bikes/scooters, one area may also be a contractor fault. Cllr King has taken photographs of the damage.

The Next Meeting has been arranged for Monday 6th April 2020 at 7:30pm.

The Annual Parish Meeting has been arranged for Wednesday 23rd April 2020 at 7:30pm

This meeting closed at 9:10pm.