

GREAT GRANSDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 2nd October 2017

Those present were:

Andrew Pett Chairman

Stephanie Beaumont Vice Chairman

Diane Taylor Clerk

Michael Capps Parish Councillor

Nick Ginn Parish Councillor

Ann Cosgrave Parish Councillor

Debi Pearce Parish Councillor

Jeff Gorton Parish Councillor

Giles Scott Parish Councillor

Alan Rowbotham Parish Councillor

District Councillor Barbara Boddington, District Councillor Richard West

County Councillor Julie Wisson and 4 members of the public

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

2. Apologies. There were no apologies for absence.

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

4. Minutes of the previous monthly meeting held on 4th September 2017 together with the minutes of the planning meeting held on 19th September 2017, which had been circulated, were approved and accordingly signed by the chairman.

5. OPEN FORUM. The meeting was closed for eleven minutes and members of the public were invited to speak. Councillor Barbara Boddington reported on the number of follow up letters (28,000) sent to householders who had not returned their Electoral Roll forms. She also spoke about the district wards, with Great Gransden now coming within the Great Paxton district served by one councillor. Councillor Richard West reported that the District Council accounts had been accepted by the auditors. There are still problems with bin collections for residents in Eltisley Road and Caxton Road who are served by a different collection schedule to the rest of the village. An assistant is being employed to work with Tamsin Miles, HDC's tree officer. When questioned about private money being used to employed planning officers, Councillor West made it clear that this would not happen as it would compromise officers' impartiality. Councillor Julie Wisson reported on recent speedwatch sessions in Abbotsley, the results having shown a dramatic decrease in the numbers of vehicles speeding through the village when compared to 2015. The 40mph buffer zone appears to be working. 500 vehicles per hour were recorded during peak times in the morning, less in the evening with a decrease in the number of drivers speeding at between 36 and 52mph. Debi Pearce commented that these figures were similar to Great Gransden. Councillor Wisson also spoke about her involvement with the proposed new primary school in St Neots.

6. Matters Arising: 6.1. Neighbourhood Plan. Stephanie Beaumont reported that a leaflet had been delivered to each household over the weekend inviting support from the village. There are 3 residents who had expressed an interest in being involved. Following discussion, councillors agreed to defer a vote on whether or not to proceed with a Neighbourhood Plan to the November meeting to allow residents more time to express an interest in becoming involved.

6.2. Tree Safety. Michael Capps reported that he had been unable to obtain the names of experts from HDC to contact for advice. Once the information is available, the clerk will obtain quotes for the cost of inspecting the village trees. The Parish Council had also received an enquiry from HDC concerning the notice of proposed works to the ash trees in Little Lane. This matter had been ongoing since February when HDC was asked to advise on remedial works following a resident's concern about possible damage to property. HDC suggested that the

Matters Arising - continued:

advice of a tree surgeon should be sought, following which the notice of proposed works was submitted. This advice is now being questioned despite HDC providing no help. Councillor West was invited to comment. He gave his support to the Parish Council proceeding with the work and Councillor Boddington concurred. He stated that it was part of Tamsin Miles' job description to provide advice but her workload had prevented her from doing so, hence the forthcoming employment of an assistant. Councillors questioned the District Council's decision to cut the Tree Warden's position with the loss of Bridget Halford and the cost of employing two officers to advise on trees when the work had previously been carried out solely by Brian Odgen. Although the date of the notice of proposed works had not yet expired, it was proposed by Michael Capps that the work should go ahead on 5th/6th October as scheduled by the tree surgeon. Seconded by Giles Scott and carried unanimously. HDC will be advised of this together with the reasons, as well as being notified of Councillor West's support.

6.3. Multi-Use Games Area. Stephanie Beaumont reported that 3 companies had been approached for quotes and the cost will go out to tender. The Poor's Land Charity had pledged £5,000 towards the project and an indoor sports day event will be held on 26th November 2017 for all age groups to raise funds towards the project.

7. Ecops Report. There were no reported incidents affecting Great Gransden. Jeff Gorton spoke about the security problems at the allotments with tools having been stolen from the container. Many years ago, there was a similar problem with thefts from the cemetery shed. A padlocked metal cage was installed to provide an extra level of security for the cemetery equipment which is no longer required as grass cutting is carried out by contractors. Councillors agreed to allow the Allotment Society to remove and use the cage in their container if required.

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

Proposed Stephanie Beaumont, seconded Alan Rowbotham.	
Buchans Landscapes for sportsfield grass cutting (August)	£389.70
DP Garden Works for cemetery grass cutting (September)	£190.00
Clerk's salary for September 2017	£490.85
Clerk's office expenses for September	£2.60
Robert & Margie McIntosh for Garden of Remembrance	£15.00
Cambridgeshire County Council for LHI Scheme contribution 2016/17	£1,825.58
PKF Littlejohn LLP for external audit 2016/17	£240.00
Logic Visual Communications Ltd for Reading Room projector	£2,989.20

9. Financial Statement for September 2017. 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 September 2017.

10. Local Highway Improvement Bid 2018/19. Of the 4 areas identified for funding, councillors agreed to submit a bid for levelling the elevated section of the Crow Tree Street footpath rather than installing a railing. The strong camber makes the path dangerous in winter. This problem had previously been discussed with Ian Winfield, Highways who had suggested making an application under the LHI Scheme. Additionally, it was agreed to apply for a 40mph buffer zone along Meadow Road. This has worked well in Abbotsley. The total cost could be in the region of £8,000 which now includes provision for officer time in assessing the proposals. Andrew Pett proposed a bid for Crow Tree Street footpath and a 40mph buffer zone for Meadow Road with a maximum contribution from the Parish Council of £2,000 Seconded by Ann Cosgrave and carried unanimously.

11. Fishing Sign. Councillors agreed the new signage save for the following amendment ‘Fishing restricted to residents of the Gransdens’. Proposed by Stephanie Beaumont, seconded by Jeff Gorton and carried unanimously.

12. Digital Influence and Digital Mapping. The clerk’s report had been circulated outlining the advantages to the Parish Council of digital maps. The initial cost for Parish Online is £91 which includes a set-up fee. Clerk to obtain further information to include whether the maps can be reproduced. The council will sign up for a free month’s trial.

13. Crown & Cushion Public House. The moratorium period expires on 18th October 2017 after which time the owner is free to market the property on the open market. It is understood that a local resident is interested in purchasing the property and in the interim the pub is being run by Chris Clark. If a sale does not take place within 12 months, another moratorium period can be triggered if the owner still wishes to sell the property.

Councillor Boddington left.

14. Highways. Ann Cosgrave asked when the new light in Sand Road will be connected. The time scale is 6-8 weeks but should be connected later this month. Also, the drain in Church Street has not yet been cleared, although has been reported. There are 2 fly-tipped cylinders in Caxton Road which need clearing.

Debi Pearce asked about ‘Speedwatch’ signs at either end of the Gransdens. As each sign costs £200 the matter was left on the table.

Stephanie Beaumont reported the pot holes along Huntingdon Street, St Neots. This can be reported on CCC’s portal.

Giles Scott reported the culvert in Eltisley Road which has been reported to CCC.

Michael Capps asked about the trees in Fox Street which Highways should be removing. Clerk to chase. He also spoke about the county council’s contract for signs, citing the case of the horse warning sign requested by Waresley Parish Council, the cost of which has now risen. Councillor Julie Wisson commented that the original cost of the sign was an estimate and not a quote.

Andrew Pett spoke about the sign by Collings Bros which has been knocked down. This has been reported but may take up to 3 months to be dealt with.

14.1. Grain Lorries, Sand Road. Stephanie Beaumont spoke again about HGVs using Sand Road. No response had been received to the Parish Council’s request for signs at each end of the road. Numerous contractors and drivers were involved in transporting to and from the airfield storage facility and it was not known who was renting the facility. Councillors to keep a watching brief.

14.2. Parking, West Street. Jeff Gorton reported the dangerous parking on the corner of West Street and Webbs Meadow during school drop off and collection times. Ann Cosgrave commented the same situation arises in Middle Street and Church Street. Clerk to ask PCSO Braddick to attend to speak to the drivers. Andrew Pett agreed to speak to the school Headteacher to highlight the problem to parents.

15. CORRESPONDENCE. 15.1. Councillors noted the external audit for the year ending 31st March 2017 was completed with no issues raised by the external auditor.

15.2. Two quotes had been obtained for relaying the church yard path. Three further contractors had been approached but had failed to provide a quote. There was a large variation between the two quotes and councillors agreed a third quote is necessary. Clerk to seek a third quote.

15.3. Councillors noted the letter from St Neots Museum requesting financial assistance in return for free entry to the museum for residents.

15.4. Councillors noted the letter from Anglian Water concerning the work to install a new sewerage pipeline along the edge of the fields on Waresley Road.

Correspondence – continued:

15.5. Councillors noted the initial results of HDC's parking survey.

15.6. Stephanie Beaumont agreed to attend the Parish and Town Council Conference on 9th October, if available.

15.7. Councillors considered the email from a Jack Lovesey requesting provision of a skateboarding park for teenagers. Whilst the email was persuasive, this had been looked at on two previous occasions and failed due to lack of funding and insurance issues as the site would need to be inspected daily. Councillors agreed that the village tennis court would not be a suitable site with the sportsfield being more appropriate. Clerk to pass the email onto the GSRA and suggest that a questionnaire might be the way forward to gauge the level of support for a skatepark. Clerk to respond to Jack Lovesey putting forward suggestions for surveying the local teenagers about the project.

Councillor Julie Wisson left.

16. Planning. 1. 17/01818/S73 Removal or variation of Conditions 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7 and 9 for application 17/00257/FUL various reasons, 46 Meadow Road. Michael Capps proposed 'Approval' on the ground that all variations have been explained with reasons. Seconded by Giles Scott and carried unanimously.

2. Marigolds, 18 Middle Street. Councillors noted the reply from HDC that a fence within the curtilage of a listed building requires planning permission but the Conservation Team Leader has no issue with the type of fence that has been erected and no enforcement action will be taken if the owner fails to apply for permission. The division of the garden of a listed building is not a breach of planning control.

3. Planning Applications. Michael Capps spoke about the poor quality of plans available on HDC's website with some detail illegible. Clerk to write to HDC asking if the quality of scanned documents can be improved.

The Next Meeting has been arranged for Monday 6th November 2017

This meeting closed at 9.17pm.