

GREAT GRANSDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 3rd October 2016

Those present were:

Andrew Pett Vice Chairman

Diane Taylor Clerk

Michael Capps Parish Councillor

Alan Rowbotham Parish Councillor

District Councillor Richard West, County Councillor Julie Wisson

and 1 member of the public

Stephanie Beaumont Parish Councillor

George Craze Parish Councillor

Debi Pearce Parish Councillor

Ann Cosgrave Parish Councillor

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

2. Apologies. Apologies were received from Parish Councillors Ian Selkirk and Jeff Gorton and District Councillor Barbara Boddington.

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

4. Minutes of the previous monthly meetings held on 5th and 26th September 2016, which had been circulated, were approved and accordingly signed by the vice chairman.

5. OPEN FORUM. The meeting was closed for seven minutes. Councillor Wisson reported that the devolution meeting scheduled for this month has been put back to November. The government is drafting orders for the combined authority which will be put to the county council in November for agreement and will then be passed by the government in time for an elected mayor to stand in May. She also reported notice of a road closure along the A1198 between 22nd and 24th October. Councillor West reported that there would also be a special meeting of HDC in November to discuss devolution. He also reported having attending a governance meeting approving HDC's accounts. He commented that the issue of bin collections is ongoing although the problem of missed bin collections in Middle Street could be resolved by collecting these bins at the end of the round. Councillors commented that when these bins were collected before 8am there was no problem but collection at school drop off time causes the difficulty because of parked cars. There is no problem when blue bins are emptied as these are emptied at a different time. He also reported that the planned meeting about the A428 on 29th September was cancelled.

6. Matters Arising: 6.1. A428 Public Meeting. Following the cancelled meeting, 2 additional dates had been put forward. No response has yet been received and the clerk will continue to chase.

6.2. Village Trees. Highways have responded suggesting that the tree in Church Street seems to form part of the old hedge line in which case it would belong to the land owner. They are looking into this further. Michael Capps commented that Highways are trying to avoid carrying out the maintenance work. The trees in Little Lane just required an inspection and the Fox Street trees are dead and need removing. They are on Highways land. There is a lack of service compounded by the lack of a tree officer. Alan Rowbotham commented that there is another tree in Church Street with its branches across the road and shrouding the street light. Clerk to write to the land owner. The tree in the stream along Waresley Road has been cleared by Michael Capps.

6.3. Reading Room Cottage Roof. The vice chairman had spoken to the tenants of the cottage and agreed that the quote from Ian Worboys Roofing should be accepted. Whilst it was the most expensive of the 3 quotes, it included the replacement of one of the roofing boards and the materials to be used would be longer lasting. Ann Cosgrave proposed acceptance of the quote from Ian Worboys Roofing in the sum of £1,265, seconded by Michael Capps and carried unanimously.

7. Ecops Report. There were no reported incidents affecting Great Gransden.

8. Financial Statement for September 2016. The sheet filed as Appendix No. 1 had been circulated. The statement was unanimously approved and signed by the vice chairman. Councillors also noted the budget review as at the end of September 2016.

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

Proposed Michael Capps, seconded Stephanie Beaumont.	
Peter T Round for Sportsfield grass cutting (September)	£225.00
DP Garden Works for cemetery grass cutting (September)	£180.00
Clerk's salary for September 2016	£470.81
Clerk's office expenses for September	£1.92
Jeff Gorton for replacement cemetery shed padlock	£9.67
Mr & Mrs McIntosh for Garden of Remembrance	£30.00
PKF Littlejohn LLP for external audit 2015/16	£240.00
Capalc for Annual Catch Up Day (15 th July 2016)	£30.00

10. Parish Council Web Forum. Debi Pearce reported on the moderate uptake so far, although the forum has only been operating for a month. She had circulated a proposal to councillors whereby it would be helpful to circulate notification of events such as meeting dates and changes, and any agendas or minutes relating to these. There should be a topic heading on the forum for notifications. Also there are straight forward questions that would benefit from a quick response if no consultation is required. Stephanie Beaumont commented that the forum was becoming another 'Touchbase' with some forum members using it to chat about matters rather than in its intended purpose for members of the public to bring issues to councillors' attention. Villagers can contact council members directly to raise matters and the forum is just another means of communicating. Whilst information is posted on the noticeboard and the website, the forum enables information to be provided directly to members of the forum. The forum has been set up for an initial 6-month trial. Councillors agreed it would be useful to post notices but concern was expressed about the extra work involved in answering questions. Stephanie Beaumont proposed putting a notices topic on the web forum, seconded by Andrew Pett and carried unanimously.

11. Local Highway Improvement Initiative 2017/18. The vice chairman reported that the sub-committee had met to outline a proposal. The closing date is 30th November 2016. A formal proposal will be brought to the November meeting but the committee were looking at a 40mph speed limit along Meadow Road as there are 14 residential entry points between the village sign and the 30mph sign. Also white gates on entry to the village along Meadow Road and Caxton Road, two of the areas for speeding traffic and a pinch point just before the 30mph limit on Meadow Road or Caxton Road. It is intended to keep costs to a maximum of £10,000.

12. Sportsfield Pavilion. Six quotes had been circulated, 3 for the insulation work and 3 for replacement windows. The sportsfield committee had indicated the preferred contractors and agreed to indemnify the Parish Council for the full value of the vat. It was proposed by Michael Capps that the insulation quote from Aran for £730.70 and the windows quote from Trulight for £3,932.10 be accepted. Seconded by Ann Cosgrave and carried unanimously. Councillors noted the amount of work carried out by Phil Taylor in obtaining the quotes.

13. Tree Warden Post. Michael Capps spoke about the letter from Andy Moffat, HDC, in which he is suggesting that the post can be saved if parish councils are willing to fund the amount needed, circa £13,000 pa. He expressed concern that all other proposals for saving the post had been ignored and that this proposal was bound to fail as some parish councils are so small they

Tree Warden Post – continued:

would not be able to afford even a small contribution. He also expressed concern that thousands of trees are being offered for dispersal before it is agreed if the tree warden post will continue. No thought has been given to the numerous volunteers involved and the longer term cost to HDC in losing this volunteer workforce. He commented if HDC has a hidden agenda as the Godmanchester Nursery, where the seedlings are grown, is prime housing land. Councillor West commented that it is a very small amount of money and hopes that members will not allow this to be a done deal. Councillors agreed clerk to reply urging the post to be saved using funding from other sources such as the Community Infrastructure Levy. Retention of the post at a cost of £13,000 will ensure thousands of pounds of volunteer hours and one of HDC's objectives is to enhance volunteering. It is quite improper to dispose of trees before a decision is made.

14. Health and Safety Policy. The policy had been circulated. Stephanie Beaumont proposed adoption, seconded by Andrew Pett and carried unanimously.

15. Boundary Commission. The vice chairman reported that this parliamentary constituency consultation will result in Great Gransden crossing from Huntingdon into South Cambridgeshire constituency which could complicate matters. Councillors noted that it is a numbers exercise. The constituency, whilst being a rural seat, covers a very large area. There are public meetings on 10th/11th November and the consultation closes on 5th December. The number of seats in Cambridgeshire will remain the same. Details to be posted on the forum for members to comment.

16. Code of Conduct. Councillors considered the renewal of Jeff Gorton's application for a dispensation to enable him to vote on matters relating to Gransden allotments for a period of 4 years. Stephanie Beaumont proposed the dispensation be granted with voting rights, seconded by Ann Cosgrave and carried unanimously.

17. Highways. Michael Capps reported the hedge along Caxton Road needs cutting as it is impairing visibility coming out of Audley Close.

Andrew Pett reported the nettles growing along Crow Tree Street footpath. This is the grass cutting team, but the village has already had its two cuts. Michael Capps commented that the spraying time table in February was not value for money as the weeds are now growing prolific. Michael Capps agreed to trim the nettles along Crow Tree Street.

Stephanie Beaumont commented that the village looked run down with the number of weeds growing.

Ann Cosgrave asked about the resurfacing of the road through Abbotsley which has been marked for repair for quite some time. Julie Wisson stated that the time table was unknown as the road surface needs levelling first.

18. CORRESPONDENCE. 18.1. Correspondence from Sue Meredith concerning missed bin collections. The blue bins pose no problems but the grey bins are being missed due to collections taking place at the same time as school drop off with parked cars blocking the access. Stephanie Beaumont agreed to speak to the head teacher who may be willing to put cones opposite the access. Debi Pearce had spoken to neighbouring householders who are amenable to parking elsewhere during bin collection times.

18.2. Councillors noted the external audit for the year ending 31st March 2016 was completed with no issues raised by the external auditor.

Correspondence – continued:

18.3. Concerns had been raised about the yellow spray paint along Middle Street used to mark dog mess. Councillors had not realised that the paint would be so permanent and is no longer being used. Ann Cosgrave reported that two volunteers have been picking up after other peoples' dogs. Three bags had been collected from the top of Middle Street to the school, some within yards of the free bags placed on a post by Debi Pearce. Councillors commented that the spray paint did make a difference and alerted school children not to step in it. Sand Road and Crow Tree Street are also problem areas for dog fouling. Notice to be put in Roundabout.

18.4. Councillors noted the Luminus seminar on the 23rd November.

18.5. Email from Phil Taylor requesting the purchase of litter picking equipment for the village litter picking. Stephanie Beaumont proposed the purchase of 2 pickers and 4 litter bag hoops at a cost of £52 plus vat and delivery. Seconded by George Craze and carried unanimously. Clerk to place the order.

18.6. Councillors noted the final recommendations of the Electoral Review of Cambridgeshire. Great Gransden will remain in St Neots East and Gransden.

18.7. A resident had contacted the parish council about rusty water leaking from the netting at the top of the climbing frame. The planned safety inspection last month had not taken place although it unlikely this fault would have been noted. Alan Rowbotham agreed to have another look as the solution may be to drill 4 small holes to allow the water to drain out. The safety inspection has been rearranged for 20th October.

18.8. Councillors completed the Flood and Water questionnaire. There has been no flooding of houses in the last 20 years.

18.9. Councillors noted the Housing and Economic Land Availability consultation although there was nothing relating to Great Gransden.

18.10. Quotation from R Keating & Sons for damp work to the dividing wall between the Reading Room and the cottage. The quote had been obtained by the Reading Room committee suggesting that the Parish Council bears half the cost. Stephanie Beaumont proposed that the Parish Council reimburses the Reading Room committee half the cost in the sum of £442.50. Seconded by Andrew Pett and carried unanimously.

19. Planning. 1. 16/01883/HHFUL Conversion of conservatory to a garden room, 6 Whittets Close. Andrew Pett proposed 'Approval' on the grounds that it is an improvement of the property with the same footprint with no detraction for neighbours. Seconded by Ann Cosgrave and carried unanimously.

At the end of the meeting Michael Capps proposed changing the set-up of the hall for the meetings to allow better viewing of plans on the projectors. Seconded by George Craze and carried unanimously.

The Next Meeting has been arranged for Monday 7th November 2016

This meeting closed at 9.01pm.