

GREAT GRANSDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 4th July 2016

Those present were:

Ian Selkirk Chairman

Andrew Pett Vice Chairman

Diane Taylor Clerk

Michael Capps Parish Councillor

Ann Cosgrave Parish Councillor

George Craze Parish Councillor

Debi Pearce Parish Councillor

Alan Rowbotham Parish Councillor

District Councillor Richard West and County Councillor Julie Wisson

1. The meeting was opened at 7.30 pm with a silent prayer
2. **Apologies.** Apologies were received from District Councillor Barbara Boddington and Parish Councillors Stephanie Beaumont and Jeff Gorton.

3. Declarations of Interest.

Planning:

13.1. 26 Middle Street. Michael Capps and Debi Pearce declared a pecuniary interest as owners of a neighbouring property. Councillors voted to allow both councillors to remain in the hall during discussion of this item.

4. **Minutes** of the previous monthly meeting held on 6th June 2016, which had been circulated, were approved and accordingly signed by the chairman.

5. OPEN FORUM. The meeting was closed for fifteen minutes. Michael Capps raised with Councillor Julie Wisson the poor condition of the verges and his disappointment at the loss of the Tree Warden post due to funding cuts. Councillor Wisson stated that verges and footpaths will only be cut twice a year. The work goes out to tender, contractors are appointed but their work is not inspected, with reliance placed on villagers to comment on the standard of work and report this to the County Council. Concern was also expressed about the lack of weed spraying. Councillor Wisson also spoke about the devolution proposals. The Government has put forward another deal increasing the amount of money available to be spent on infrastructure, skills and housing. CCC has voted in favour but there is still concern over an elected mayor. It will be a good deal for the area if it brings more affordable housing. Councillor Richard West advised that consultation has been voted for. He also reported on a possible merger of Hinchingsbrooke and Peterborough hospitals. Both are losing money and there will be consultation. Councillor West outlined the procedure he and Councillor Boddington will use to reserve the right to refer planning to panel. He also agreed to refer councillors' concerns about the absence of a tree warden following funding cuts.

6. Matters Arising: 6.1. Parish Council Communications. Debi Pearce had prepared a report for discussion about how a web forum may operate for village debate and dialogue. Although some concerns were expressed, it was unanimously agreed to proceed on a trial basis for 6 months. Proposed by Andrew Pett, seconded by Ann Cosgrave.

6.2. Church Yard Trees. Permission has now been granted for the work to proceed and the contractor, Global Tree Solutions has been instructed to go ahead.

6.3. Mill Weir Lay-by. Councillors are still waiting for an update from Highways. The Parish Council has not yet paid its financial contribution.

6.4. Audit of our Accounts for the Year Ending 31st March 2016. The internal auditor's report had been circulated. The publishing of background papers had been raised. Councillors considered the amount of work involved in publishing background papers on the council's website. There is already a model publication scheme ensuring the parish council is transparent. Councillors agreed to consider the matter again at the next meeting.

Matters Arising – continued:

6.5. Garden of Remembrance. Jeff Gorton had prepared a report. A bequest had been made for the upkeep of the Garden of Remembrance located in the cemetery. Councillors considered the recommendation made in the report to include the employment of a gardener to maintain the area and replacing the box hedge with an alternative. Councillors unanimously agreed to accept the services of a small gardening business on a year's basis at a cost of £15 per hour. Proposed Ann Cosgrave seconded George Craze.

6.6. Local Highway Improvement Bid. Councillors considered proposals for this year's bid. Stephanie Beaumont had suggested rumble strips to Caxton Road crossing and white PVC gates on entrances to the village to denote start of 30mph zone. Ian Selkirk and Debi Pearce are due to meet the Highways projects team and will seek feedback and costs for these proposals as well as talking to them about a footpath along Meadow Road. Other suggestions included yellow lines in Middle Street and signs showing the access route through the village. Councillors discussed whether a scheme could be implemented to prevent lorries driving through the village with the use of 'Restricted Access' signs. Councillor Julie Wisson reminded councillors of the covenant between hauliers and communities asking hauliers to be more respectful when driving through villages. Provided the budget allows, Councillors also agreed to ask for one or two additional posts for the mobile speed sign, to be located on Caxton Road near the Sportsfield entrance.

6.7. Dog Fouling. A further complaint had been received from a resident with dog mess found on the village playing field. There is no longer a Dog Warden and councillors considered naming and shaming dog owners who fail to clear up after their dogs. A notice has already been put in Roundabout and there are already a number of village bins. Concern was expressed about unaccompanied dogs fouling the village. It was suggested a note could be circulated by the school and Andrew Pett agreed to approach the school. Councillors considered the use of paint spray to highlight the areas where dog mess has been left as has been used in another village. Debi Pearce and Ann Cosgrave agreed to take the lead. Michael Capps proposed £20 is set aside for the purchase of paint, seconded by Andrew Pett and carried unanimously.

6.8. Village Bins. At the request of a villager, the parish council had asked HDC to install a litter bin by the windmill. The cost of purchase and installation would have to be met by the parish council and HDC would charge £252.64 a year to empty it. Clerk to investigate if Little Gransden Parish Council would be willing to install a bin opposite the windmill within Little Gransden and if South Cambs DC would empty it. The cost of purchase and installation of a bin would be met by Great Gransden. The minutes of the joint forum meeting last month have not yet been received. When available it is hoped this will resolve the confusion over the replacement of grey bins.

7. Ecops Report. The chairman read the report that is filed hereafter as Appendix No. 1. Councillors commented that St Bartholomews's church as well as other local churches had recently been the target of lead thieves.

8. Parish/Neighbourhood Plans. Andrew Pett had prepared a report which had been circulated. The Local Plan is being updated to 2036 and is in the process of being adopted. Great Gransden is mentioned in development of small settlements, established employment areas with a map of industrial estates. There are 3 options; Neighbourhood Plans which are favoured by government and can qualify for a grant up to £9,000. They are costly to produce but give strategic weight in planning. Parish Plans don't have strategic weight unless backed by HDC but do not take as long to prepare and have the benefit of bringing the community together to draw it up. A Village Design Statement has the same characteristics of a Parish Plan but does not have to be a Parish Council initiative whilst trying to maintain the distinctive characteristics of our village. Andrew Pett agreed to circulate examples of Neighbourhood Plans, Parish plans and Village Design Statements and councillors agreed to carry the matter forward to the next meeting.

9. Financial Statement for June 2016. The sheet filed as Appendix No. 2 had been circulated. The statement was unanimously approved and signed by the chairman. Councillors also noted the budget review as at the end of June 2016.

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

Proposed Andrew Pett, seconded Michael Capps.	
Peter T Round for Sportsfield grass cutting (June)	£225.00
DP Garden Works for cemetery grass cutting (June)	£180.00
Clerk's salary for June 2016	£470.81
Clerk's office expenses for June	£4.16
Clerk for printer ink	£7.47
Anthony Malone for emergency grass cutting	£300.00
LGS Services for internal audit	£90.00

11. Highways. Councillors commented about the problems experienced with the cemetery grass cutting. There was no undertaking to remove the strimmings as there was so much long grass on the first cut. Ian Selkirk commented that it would take 3 or 4 cuts to get the cemetery grass to its usual standard.

Councillors noted that the work to repair the sunken drain cover in Caxton Road had been completed.

Michael Capps reported the ash trees in Little Lane which are damaging a neighbouring fence and may damage property. There is no one at HDC who can be approached for advice but clerk will report the matter. Councillor Richard West reported that there is an officer who could take on the role following the departure of Brian Ogden, arboricultural officer, but he is not taking on these problems. The Riddy footpath needs reporting as there are fallen trees in places. The cover on the verge outside Milestones, Middle Street lifts whenever there is heavy rain, leaving an open hole. Clerk to ask if it can be made safe.

Debi Pearce reported the gravel on the corner of Waresley Road and Meadow Road which continues to be dangerous.

Alan Rowbotham reported the circular utilities cover at the entrance to Manor Lane is broken. The Crow Tree Street path is overgrown with nettles growing from the bank making it virtually impassable. The owners of the adjoining properties have agreed to trim next to their fence but the path needs attention before The Time Travellers' production starts. Little Lane is in a similar state. It was proposed by Michael Capps, seconded by Andrew Pett and carried unanimously that Mr and Mrs McIntosh who have started a gardening business be asked to clear the paths on this occasion at a cost of £15 per hour.

There are 3 overhanging trees on Caxton Road. Clerk to contact the land owner.

A resident had raised concerns about a vehicle and trailer parking in Mill Road, near to the junction with Sand Road but as there is no traffic violation, there is nothing the Parish Council can do.

12. CORRESPONDENCE. 12.1. The clerk will be attending the Capalc Catch Up Day on 15th July.

12.2. Email from a resident about the storage of aggregate on the access road to the grain store. Councillors agreed to monitor the situation.

12.3. Letter from Barney's Club requesting permission to use the village tennis court for a funding raising event. Councillors agreed.

12.4. Councillors noted the updated Rights of Way Improvement Plan.

12.5. Councillors noted the Transparency Code consultation for larger councils.

12.6. Councillors noted Network Rail's consultation on level crossing closures.

Correspondence – continued:

12.7. Letter from HDC advising of the deletion of the Tree Warden post due to funding cuts. This affects the parish planting scheme which will go. Michael Capps spoke about the lack of consultation taken in reaching this decision. Most of the work is done by volunteers and only a small amount of money will be saved. Councillors expressed concern about protecting the environment without the support of the Tree Warden co-ordinator and volunteer support will be lost. Councillors agreed clerk to write to complain about the decision without consultation and the threat to the county, its trees and hedges.

12.8. Ross Donovan, the owner of the Sand Road site had emailed to complain about locals trespassing on his land, which is private property. Councillors agreed that this was a private matter for the landowner to deal with and not a matter for the Parish Council.

13. Planning. 1. 16/01233/HHFUL and 16/01234/LBC to amend previously approved drawings. North elevation to add a velux window and increase the size of the front window to match the kitchen window. South elevation rear, to modify the dormer window to match the height of the adjacent dormer window and to add a pair of doors which also match the adjacent doors. East elevation, to remove the previously approved chimney. Interior alterations to form a larger opening between the new extension and the kitchen, 26 Middle Street. A number of small changes are proposed to the original application. Councillors commented that it was not easy to follow the drawings. It was not possible to view the drawings on the hall's projector as the cable connection is not compatible with the council's computer. It was agreed to re-circulate the papers and request an extension of time from HDC for the parish council's response. Also clerk to ask the Reading Room if there were any plans to update the projector.

The Next Meeting has been arranged for Monday 1st August 2016

This meeting closed at 9.55pm.