

**GREAT GRANSDEN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019**

Those present were:

Andrew Pett Chairman

Giles Scott Vice Chairman

Diane Taylor Clerk

Peter King Parish Councillor

Nigel Day Parish Councillor

Nick Ginn Parish Councillor

Jeff Gorton Parish Councillor

James Catmur Parish Councillor

Michael Capps Parish Councillor

Lisbeth Ricciardi Parish Councillor

County Councillor Julie Wisson, District Councillor Richard West,

Martyn Tharratt of Kingspan/Potton and 5 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. Lisbeth Ricciardi signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form and was welcomed to the meeting by the chairman.
3. **Declarations of Interest.** There were no declarations of interest.
4. **Minutes** of the previous monthly meeting held on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2019 which had been circulated, were approved and accordingly signed by the chairman.

**5. OPEN FORUM.** The meeting was closed for thirty minutes. County Councillor Julie Wisson confirmed that the County Council will be cleaning the gullies in Middle Street and had also agreed to undertake a survey. No contact had yet been made with the Parish Council to arrange this and Julie Wisson agreed to chase the matter up. District Councillor Richard West spoke about his frustration with planning services, citing the Sand Road development with villagers having to battle to obtain information from the planning department. A new chief operating officer has been appointed following the departure of Andy Moffatt. Cllr West outlined his reasons for leaving the Development Management Committee, allowing him to speak at Report Stage in support of parish councils and residents. A resident raised concerns about the volume of traffic through the village; the construction of the A428 will not be completed until 2025/26, no Local Highway Improvement (LHI) bid has been submitted this year, the increased level of traffic converging on Plough corner particularly with the new Sand Road development and safety issues. Councillors noted the comments, outlined the difficulties in making an LHI Bid this year following the unsuccessful application last year, the comments made by the panel members determining the applications and the constraints on costs. An application has been made for a cycleway/footpath along Meadow Road through another funding avenue. The traffic sub-committee is aware of the on-going traffic problems and other funding streams will be investigated. Speedwatch continues to operate although less drivers are caught speeding due to the number of vehicles travelling in convoy. It is possible there will be less rat running when the A14 opens. Another resident spoke about the possible gift of land owned by Kingspan/Potton. Part of the land is enclosed by a triangular bank which could be a wildlife habitat for villagers to enjoy. Martyn Tharratt, Kingspan/Potton spoke about the offer made 2 years ago for use of this piece of land which is not included in the planning application for 38 custom/self-build houses and 5 show homes. This additional land is a greenfield site, land locked and not developable. It is anticipated that the new show homes will be built in May 2020 and the factory moved from site in approximately 18 months. The access along the Riddy will remain open. A resident spoke about the Sand Road planning and the application to discharge Condition 20 (off-site highway improvement works) referring to safety issues and the danger of the crossing proposals, the lack of clear sight lines, the increased traffic movement and the dispute over land ownership to enable the requisite footpath to be provided. He also addressed

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019 – continued

**Open Forum – continued:**

councillors with his concerns about the actions of the District Council, commenting that Highways are still reviewing historic documents about the ownership of land and whether HDC will allow interested parties to review and comment on the Highways report. He also commented that the development is dependent on suitable off-street parking and all planning permissions are at risk of judicial review. Cllr West confirmed that at the Development Management Committee (DMC) when permission for the development was granted, Highways had been assured by the developer that they had sufficient land to develop the highway. The flags and advertising sign have been removed as there is no permission to erect them until the development of the site begins.

**6. 18/00958/FUL Hybrid planning application comprising: 1) Applying for outline planning permission for the erection of 38 custom/self-build houses with roads, services, attenuation pond and infrastructure.** Councillors considered the possible use of the piece of land (not included in this development for housing), access to which will be via the Riddy. Suggestions included a wildlife area with a mown track, planting of trees and bushes. Funding will be needed to establish the area and maintain it. Cllr Day commented that the Neighbourhood Development Plan committee is looking to establish more green spaces within the village boundary. A number of issues were raised including boundary fences, ownership and maintenance of the Riddy and access to the planted/pond area of the adjacent developed site. The Parish Council would first need to know whether Kingspan/Potton is making an offer of an outright gift or a lease of the land. Once known, a sub-committee will be established to consider possible options. Martin Tharratt was thanked for coming to the meeting.

**7. Matters Arising: 7.1. Clerk's Vacancy.** Cllr Pett reported that Catherine Fox was the successful candidate for the clerk's position. Her appointment was unanimously approved by councillors (proposed Cllr Pett, seconded Giles Scott). Contract details and start date to be confirmed.

**7.2. Street Light Energy.** The clerk reported that Utility Aid had been instructed to procure energy quotes on behalf of the Parish Council. In the interim, 2 quotes had been received for energy costs over the next 12 months, both showing an increase of 25% on the cost of energy previously obtained via the County Council. Councillors agreed to wait to hear further from Utility Aid before deciding on a new supplier.

**7.3. Asset of Community Value. – Mandene Gardens Play Area.** The initial listing of the play area as an asset of community value expired on 10<sup>th</sup> September 2019. Advice was sought from the District Council about re-listing as the play area is due to be re-sited when 2 new houses are built on land at the bottom of Mandene Gardens. The advice from HDC is to make an application to re-list as soon as the development has been completed and the new play area is in use. As it is a condition of the planning permission for the development to be in accordance with the approved plans, if there was an application by the developer to downsize or remove the play area, an Asset of Community Value nomination could be submitted immediately. Councillors agreed to keep the matter under review and apply to nominate once the new play area is in use.

**8. Sportsfield Grass Cutting and Maintenance.** Cllr Ginn reported that the issue of grass cutting will be discussed at the next Sportsfield Committee (GSRA) meeting. He will recommend that the GSRA is responsible for the cost of grass cutting and maintenance over and above the annual costs set aside by the Parish Council. The committee has raised concerns about the number of cuts taking place and a system of record keeping to verify the number of cuts will be looked into by the GSRA, along with access to the field. The GSRA will confirm the grass cutting specification before the Parish Council seeks new quotes.

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019 – continued

**9. Website Accessibility Statement.** Cllr Day reported on the new regulations which require the Parish Council to be compliant by 23<sup>rd</sup> September 2020. He has already started to make changes to the website and will carry out a basic accessibility check. Areas to look out will include whether the minutes are in an accessible form. The clerk will contact Capalc for further information.

**10. Financial Statement** for October 2019. 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 October 2019.

**11. Cheques for approval.** The following payments were approved:

Proposed Cllr Gorton, seconded Cllr Scott.

DP Garden Works for cemetery grass cutting (October)	£210.00
Mrs D Taylor – clerk’s salary for October 2019	£544.74
Mrs D Taylor – clerk’s expenses for October 2019	£3.50
Robert & Margie McIntosh for Garden of Remembrance	£7.50

**12. Precept for 2020/21.** A summary of receipts and payments had been circulated together with a proposed budget. Basic annual costs for next year were estimated to be £22,875 plus an extra £400/£500 for increased street lighting energy charges. Councillors considered future costs of new windows for the Reading Room cottage, ongoing tree work, a possible contribution towards the cost of a new cycleway/footpath along Meadow Road if the funding application is successful together with any increase in reserves. Councillors agreed to set aside £500 toward the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) sinking fund, £500 for street lights, £500 for annual maintenance costs of the MUGA, and £1,500 towards professional fees for the cemetery. A budget was also agreed for future Reading Room cottage windows of £1,500 and £1,000 provision for the Reading Room village hall. Taking these additional reserves and expenses into account Jeff Gorton proposed raising the precept to £25,000, an increase of £1,000 on last year. Seconded by Lisbeth Ricciardi and carried with 8 votes in favour and 1 against. The budget for 2020/21 was also agreed.

Cllr Julie Wisson left.

**13. Highways.** A number of ash trees have self-set in Little Lane, adjacent to the school wall. Cllr Capps agreed to remove them. The hedge bordering the playing field and Little Lane needs cutting as does the hedge alongside the ditch by the muga. Clerk to obtain quotes. The village drains need clearing as most are full with silt. Cllr Wisson had confirmed in open forum to pass on the County Council contact. The sign at the bottom of West Street on the bank is leaning towards the road. A pothole in Fox Street will be reported as will blocked gullies in Mill Road.

**14. Correspondence. 14.1.** The Parish Council’s grey bin has been relocated to the Reading Room and is used for the litter emptied by councillor volunteers from bins on the playing field and cemetery. It continues to be emptied by HDC free of charge but this arrangement may change as the waste is classified as commercial and may incur a charge.

**14.2.** Councillors noted the information from HDC concerning Houses in Multiple Occupation.

**14.3.** The date of Capalc’s AGM was noted.

**15. Planning. 1. 19/80334/COND Conditional Information for 17/01375/OUT: C20 (off site works), Land North East of Mandene Gardens.** Councillors had noted the points raised during open forum including visibility splays, disputed ownership of the hedge on land required to construct a new footpath and increased traffic when children would be walking to school

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> November 2019 - concluded

**Planning – continued:**

leading to safety issues. The detail on the current plan submitted with the application is inaccurate particularly with regard to the visibility down Mill Road which is not as stated and the construction of the footpath relies on land which is not in the ownership of the developer. It was unanimously resolved to reiterate the Parish Council's concerns regarding safety at this junction which have not been mitigated by the proposed off-site works for this development. (Proposed Cllr Gorton, seconded Cllr Scott). On a separate issue, councillors agreed to highlight the inappropriate level of lighting proposed along Sand Road, given the rural nature of the village.

**14.2. Re-siting of Sand Road Street Light.** Councillors noted the proposals to re-site the street light in front of the listed cottage, which will be ineffectual for pedestrians walking along Sand Road. Councillors expressed their concerns that the re-siting of the light will be a potential detriment to the listed cottage on the corner, within a conservation area, if the column is moved within the curtilage of the cottage.

**The Next Meeting has been arranged for Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2019**

This meeting closed at 9.47pm.