

**GREAT GRANSDEN PARISH COUNCIL**  
**Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 6th July 2020**  
**By remote conference**

Those present were:

Andrew Pett Chairman

Giles Scott Vice Chairman

Catherine Fox Clerk

Michael Capps Parish Councillor

Nick Ginn Parish Councillor

Lisbeth Ricciardi Parish Councillor

James Catmur Parish Councillor

Nigel Day Parish Councillor

Peter King Parish Councillor

Jeff Gorton Parish Councillor

County Councillor Julie Wisson

District Councillor Richard West

And 8 members of the public

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

2. **Apologies.** No apologies were received.

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

4. **Minutes** of the previous monthly meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2020 and also of the planning meeting held on 18<sup>th</sup> June 2020, which had been circulated, were approved and will be signed accordingly by the Chairman.

5. **OPEN FORUM.** The meeting was closed for 22 minutes.

Objections were raised around the proposed planning application at 6-8 Fox Street. (See item 16.1). There were concerns regarding the over-bearing and imposing nature of the proposed building on the homeowners immediately adjacent to the site. A detailed report stipulating all concerns had been received and circulated to all Councillors prior to the meeting. In addition, trustees of the Reading Room expressed concerns over the impact of this development on parking on Fox Street. On-street parking is an issue, often with multiple cars parked at any one time. Users of the Reading Room often use the road for parking too, with the designated car park at the rear in need of some repair due to the deterioration of the surface.

In direct response, a representative of the applicant highlighted that previous developments at the site had created 3 off road parking spaces that were not present when the property was first purchased. Therefore, it was reasonable to have vehicles on the road as this would have been the case had earlier works not been completed.

A village resident highlighted the continuing issues with the actions of Hayfield Homes and the perceived failure of the Planning Enforcers to act appropriately. The Parish Council were asked to offer support in holding the authorities to account over what the resident believes is an unacceptable breach of planning conditions. Councillors agreed to look at this (see item 15.8). Cllr West reported that he had written to the Planning Enforcement Team Leader in support of the points raised by residents and previously by the Parish Council. Cllr West said that during the speech made by Secretary of State for Housing, Communities and Local Government, (the Rt Hon Robert Jenrick MP), it was said that there would be financial packages for councils to help maintain front line services. For the foreseeable future it remains important that authorities must continue to work together. Central Government had pledged support to councils to keep homeless people from sleeping rough, and had also offered support to county colleagues with social care.

Cllr West drew the meeting's attention to a speech made by the Minister for Regional Growth and Local Government (Rt Hon Simon Clarke MP). His main point was to balance the economy across the country. It was noted that areas with elected Mayors would receive extra monies because national government had scrutiny over the expenditure of the funding. There will be a

white paper this year but the main message is that town and parish councils have been serving their communities well, and that there is need for more power locally. The feeling at district level is that National Government want to work with local government in the recovery stage after the pandemic.

Cllr Wisson reported that the recycling centre in St Neots was now operating an appointments system which was working well. Demands on the local support group had begun to diminish with requests for help dramatically reduced.

## **6. Matters Arising**

**6.1 NDP Steering Group Update** Cllr Pett said that the steering group continue to make good progress on drafting the plan and attachments. The application process is open for grants to support the plan, and the total grant has been increased to £10k. The committee will apply for the remaining balance, with the aim of submitting the plan during this year, assuming the system restarts after the COVID restrictions are lifted.

The Steering group will continue to be supported by Rachel Hogger via ACRE. Mark Deas, who was the previous contact, has now left ACRE.

**6.2 Gate on Sports field Entrance** Concerns had been raised about the vulnerability of the Sports field for antisocial use. It was the view of the Parish Council that the facility should remain accessible to the villagers and recreational groups that make good and proper use of it. Difficulties with vehicles obstructing the road if a gate was installed right at the entrance of the car park were highlighted. It was agreed that gates placed further back would negate this problem. However, a more favourable solution would be to secure the field itself rather than the car park. Cllr Ginn will attend a meeting of the GSRA committee meeting later in July where he will feed this back and gather further input.

**6.3 Kissing gate at the foot of Doctors Lane** Cambridgeshire County Council have provided a quote for providing a kissing gate. Permission will need to be sought from both landowners for the gate to be installed. The Parish Council can take responsibility for the gate thereafter, becoming liable for its maintenance and up keep. As the path is fairly narrow, access for buggies and pushchairs must be fully considered. Clerk to investigate the size of the gates and the space available for installation, whilst still trying to make contact with the second landowner.

**6.4 Broken Swing at the Park** Cllr Capps reported that he had repaired the broken swing which looked to have been deliberately dismantled. The shackles had been replaced and the swing was back in use. Cllrs wished to thank Cllr Capps for his help in ensuring a quick resolution to this.

**6.5 Broken See-Saw at the Park** Cllr King had obtained a quote from John Vinnell for repair of the broken sides of the see-saw. The amount quoted was for £250+ VAT. A second quote provided by Wicksteed was substantially higher at £406.88 ex VAT. Cllr King proposed that John Vinnells quote be accepted. This was seconded by Cllr Gorton and unanimously agreed.

**6.6 Broken bench on Caxton Road** Residents had raised concerns around the further deterioration of the bench on Caxton Road. This bench needs to be added to the asset register of the Parish Council as it does not appear to be listed. Cllr King agreed to obtain a quote for repair from John Vinnell and also from Richard Dring.

**6.7 BACS and Automated payments by the Parish Council** Currently all payments made by the Parish Council are done by cheque. A recent payment request has prompted questions around the need for the council to be able to settle invoices electronically. References to this can be found in the Parish Councils Financial Regulations. Further enquiries will need to be made around the limitations and control restrictions associated with this. Clerk to investigate this further.

**7. Consultation: A428 Black Cat to Caxton Gibbet – Community Forum Meeting** Cllr Catmur had attended the virtual meeting. In summary, there were no substantial changes with the

route remaining the same. The compound would be at Wintringham Park to reduce the need for lorries to use the A428. No start date for the works has yet been announced.

Separately, Councillors queried the progress of the new Rail Link. Surveys of land had begun to take place, though the sites were more southerly than had been anticipated. It was noted that the corridor for the new rail route seemed to be widening; covering an area from Tetworth to Abbotsley.

**8. Local Highways Improvement Bid 2021/22** The meeting of the committee had not taken place but will be scheduled before the next meeting of the Parish Council.

**9. Highways England Local Improvement Funds** No further correspondence had been received in relation to historic bids.

**10. Risk Assessment for re-opening of the MUGA** A model risk assessment for the safe re-opening of playgrounds has been received from NALC. Cllr King and Cllr Day will draft a version suitable for use in Great Gransden. Cllr Day will look at drafting appropriate signage which will be agreed by Councillors via email. Councillors were reminded that signs and notices of the rules were for polite guidance only. It was not the job of the Parish Council to enforce them.

**11. Parish Council Meetings as lockdown restrictions continue to ease** Current guidance from NALC recommends that meetings continue to be held remotely with the possibility of hybrid meetings (if practical) to be held in the future. The Parish Council unanimously agreed to continue with remote meetings until comprehensive guidance was provided on the resumption of face to face meetings.

**12. Financial Statement for June 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 June 2020.

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

Proposed Cllr Pett, seconded by Cllr Capps.

Mrs C Fox – Clerk’s salary for June 2020	£561.08
Mrs C Fox – Clerk’s expenses for June 2020	£27.98
SSE (Street Lighting May / June 2020)	£215.77
Balfour Beatty (2019-22 Year 1 Q4)	£124.20
Mr D Brown (New Padlock for Reading Room Car Park Gate)	£21.00
Mr D Brown (New metal latch for gate at Reading Room Car Park)	£50.00
DP Garden works & Grounds Maintenance (cemetery grass cuts – June)	£230.00
Buchans Landscaping & Grounds Maintenance	£417.59
R McIntosh (Garden of Remembrance – May 2020)	£15.00
R McIntosh (Garden of Remembrance – June 2020)	£7.50

#### **14. Highways**

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

**14.1** Cllr Capps had removed the damaged sign at the top of the playing field near the MUGA. A new replacement sign is required. Cllr Capps will liaise with the Clerk to source. The new sign will be re-positioned to the front of the tree to the right of the playing field entrance.

## 15. Correspondence

**15.1** Councillors noted the Neighbourhood Planning Update

**15.2** Councillors noted the correspondence received from a village resident about the flooding in Middle Street. Cllr Wisson had forwarded details of this to Highways who had responded that primarily, *'The main reason that Middle Street flooding occurs is that the existing system from the top of Middle Street to the brook cannot cope when we have a torrential downpour. The system fills up and then backs up causing the water to come out of the gullies, and in the latest case the footpath edge due to a damaged pipe'* Highways have approached the asset team for funding to enlarge the system but, with drainage issues that are causing flooding to properties taking priority there is no certainty as to when this will be granted. Councillors considered the possibility of a build-up of brick from the damaged drain further down on Crow Tree Street. There are some ownership issues over who is responsible (either Anglian Water or Highways) which means that some of the drains and gullies are not subject to regular organised maintenance. The Parish Council will continue to monitor this.

**15.3** Correspondence received from the Rural Community Energy Fund was noted. In addition to this, Cllr Ginn said that in future ground heat source energy may be of benefit to the whole village. Cllr Ginn will investigate this further and will report back at a future meeting.

**15.4** Councillors noted the request for a donation received from Magpas. Councillors agreed that although the cause was a good one, it was not within the Parish Councils remit to spend allocated precept funds on charities decided by them. It was unanimously agreed that no precedents for making donations of this nature should be set.

**15.5** Councillors noted the request for a memorial bench on Caxton Road. In principal, the Parish council have no objections. However, permission must be sought from Highways who are the land owners of the proposed location. Councillors also wish to see more detailed plans before the bench is installed.

**15.6** Confirmation of receipt of outstanding documents – Reading Room Cottage (18/01388/HHFUL:C3 Window C4:Door) Councillors noted the submission of drawings relating to the replacement windows and doors at the Reading Room Cottage.

**15.7** 2020 Surface Dressing Program and Part closure of Eltisley Road. This was duly noted.

**15.8** Correspondence from a resident around the conduct of Hayfield Homes was noted. It had been asked that the Parish Council show support by writing directly to figures of influence. It was unanimously agreed that the frustrations of the Parish Council in relation to the ongoing issues and contraventions of imposed conditions should be put forward in the strongest possible terms. The Parish Council remain deeply concerned that in this instance, democratic stakeholder engagement has failed and that cannot go unchallenged.

## 16. Planning

### **1. 1. PARISH COUNCIL CONSULTATION – APPLICATION REF. 20/00752/FUL Erection of a first floor extension over existing post office and shop, including external access stairs to rear of post office, to form a single apartment dwelling. Land at and including 6 To 8 Fox Street Great Gransden**

Councillors carefully considered the objections presented to them in the report provided. Concerns around the excess surface water created by the proposed building works was expected to be minimal as the property sits in a low flood risk area. Highways had not provided any clear guidance with regards to off street parking. However, Councillors noted all of the concerns raised during Open Forum and also within the report. It was suggested that congestion on Fox Street was particularly bad currently, but that it wasn't always that way and was dependent on the time of day. As the Reading Room does have a car parking provision, it was not felt that additional vehicles parked on the road would cause any significant detriment to the use of the facility and therefore this could not be a factor in the Parish Councils decision.

It was the view of the Parish Council that every effort had been made by the applicant to minimise the negative impact on the street scene and on the immediate neighbouring properties. However, the impact on the property directly adjacent was sympathetically noted. On balance, Councillors unanimously agreed to recommend **Approval** with the following caveats:

1. Restrictions should be imposed on the decking area on the flat roof at the front of the proposed extension. This decking area should not be used as a terrace (i.e. there should be no pot plants and/or seating) as this would be considered detrimental to the street scene.
2. The council request a reasonable limit on the number of cars associated with the property that will be allowed to park on the street. It was recognised that this issue although less of a problem while the extension is under the ownership of 6-8 Fox Street, may become more significant if ever the property was sold or separated.

This was proposed by Cllr Pett, seconded by Cllr Scott and unanimously approved. Clerk to submit comments to HDC.

**2.PARISH COUNCIL CONSULTATION – APPLICATION REF. 20/00988/S73  
Variation of condition 2 for 18/02269/FUL to include amended plans to replace carport/  
garages with residential area and alterations to fenestration  
Home Barn Eltisley Road Great Gransden Sandy SG19 3AS**

Councillors agreed that the changes were minor planning amendments. The footprint remains the same nor were there any changes to the roofline. Cllr Pett proposed approval with no further comments to be submitted. This was seconded by Cllr Capps and unanimously approved.

**The Next Meeting has been arranged for Monday 3rd August 2020 at 7:30pm**

This meeting closed at 9.18pm