

GREAT GRANSDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 1st November 2021

Those present were:

Giles Scott Chairman

Nick Ginn Vice Chairman

Catherine Fox Clerk

Michael Capps Parish Councillor

Vikki Murphy Parish Councillor

Peter King Parish Councillor

Cathy Davis Parish Councillor

Nigel Day Parish Councillor

Andrew Pett Parish Councillor

Cathy Davis Parish Councillor

District Councillor Richard West
and 3 members of the public

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

2. **Apologies.** Apologies were received from Councillor James Catmur.

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

4. **Minutes** of the previous full Parish Council meeting held on the 4th October 2021 were approved and signed accordingly by the Chairman.

5. **OPEN FORUM.** The meeting was closed for 7 minutes.

District Councillor West gave a brief presentation to the meeting updating the Parish Council on the current status of Planning Application ref 21/01521/S73 Variation to condition 20 (off site works) Sand Road which, at the time of the meeting, had not yet been determined by the Development Management Committee due to a backlog of consultation requests for planning applications.

The environmental surveys for the EWR were being carried out and are due to be completed early 2022. Councillor West also confirmed that consultations were ongoing around the A428 black Cat to Caxton development.

The OxCam Arc discussions are ongoing. The building of 1 million new homes would bring an estimated 3 million people. This would have considerable impact on the local infrastructures, roads and services. Councillor West expressed concern that the predictions around this were based on current figures and that therefore did not provide an accurate picture. The Parish Council were advised by Councillor West to remain engaged and responsive to all future discussions around this.

Matthew Briggs gave a brief update on behalf of County Broadband. Currently, County Broadband are close to the target number of households signed up across Abbotsley and Great Gransden. Of the 53 remaining houses needed to meet the target, 35 are within Great Gransden. The last community meeting will go ahead on the 9th November following which the project will be finalised to ensure that it can move forward within the specified and agreed timescales. Even if the target number of homes is not met, the project will go ahead in some form.

6. Matters Arising

6.1 Neighbourhood Plan During last month's meeting questions were raised around the ownership of the Mill Weir Pond, which has been designated as an industrial area on HDC's plans. HDC have been approached to redraw the boundaries declaring the historic registration of the Mill Weir as common land. The fact that Mill Weir is Common Land is now accepted by both HDC and CCC. It will be listed in the Draft NDP as a Local Green Space along with the Sportsfield, the Playing Field and the Allotments, and will be described as Common Land managed by the Parish Council.

The Neighbourhood Plan working party has finished current editing (with the exception of minor tweaks and inserting photos and maps) and has requested that the plan be adopted by the Parish Council at this meeting. This will then start a process which involves a short period of internal preparation and then a 6-week consultation period using Google Forms. Simultaneously, a copy of the Plan and supporting documents will be sent to HDC for comments. After 6 weeks the plan will be edited to reflect comments made during consultation. HDC will consult with statutory bodies (5 weeks) and write final report (2 weeks) ahead of the Reg 16 consultation.

6.2 In response to the points raised during open forum at the meeting held on 4th October 2021, Councillors discussed the following:

Replacement of the Roundabout Councillor King highlighted that it was likely that the roundabout could be repaired rather than replaced. The bolts holding it in place are too long and could be a possible cause of injury. It was suggested that the Playing field working group hire an angle grinder and remove the protruding bolts so as to reduce the risk of injury to users. It was noted that the roundabout though old, is functional and structurally sound. Councillor Capps raised the issue of the soft surfaces around the roundabout shrinking which may mean that the distance between the bottom of the roundabout and the ground is now outside of the legal limits. The working party will also look at this.

A map of the village for new-comers

Councillors discussed existing maps of the village that could be updated, in particular the one outside the Reading Room. It was agreed that a map with the local names would be beneficial. Councillor King suggested that a possible solution would be to have the booklet produced by the Benefice revised to include a map. Maps could be obtained from HDC and additional features added. The possibility of several maps showing different aspects of the village (businesses/local place names etc) was also discussed. Councillor King to liaise with the Bluebell-19/Benefice committee to obtain permission/agreement.

Pedestrian safety at the Meadow Road/West Street junction

There is currently an application in to Highways England for a footpath along Meadow Road however the Parish Council have received no response as yet. It is likely that a footpath would be a pre-requisite for any further road safety measures.

The Parish Council have also investigated the possibility of reducing the speed limit along Meadow Road to 20mph. However, the Police had not been in support citing an inability to enforce any changes. The safety of pedestrians along Meadow Road remains an ongoing priority for the Parish Council.

Installation of a friendship swing at the park

Inclusive play equipment is available at a cost, to involve children with disabilities in playing and social activities. Any accessible playground requires a great deal of planning as the diverse challenges and potential risks to children and adults using the site need to be considered. As a result, understanding users' needs is important. It was agreed that the Parish Council should conduct a village survey, (possibly using social media) in order to establish if there is a wider need for inclusive play equipment. Councillor King will look into this.

Installation of a ramp at the Little Lane entrance to the park

An enquiry has been logged with Cambs County Council regarding a ramp from the Public Right of Way known as Little Lane into the park. As yet there has been no response, but it will be followed up and any suggestions will be duly considered once received.

Purchase of the Old School House

Unfortunately, the Parish Council does not have the funds available to purchase the Old School House. However, it was unanimously agreed that support would be given to a change of use request should the school/Local Authority ever be in a position to acquire the property.

6.3 Elm Trees on Church Street

HDC have granted permission for the proposed tree works to the Elm Trees on Church Street. Quotations will need to be obtained for a sustained period of treatment and management to ensure that all suckers are removed and that there is no regrowth in the future. Councillor Capps will assist in producing a brief that gives explicit direction to any contractor providing a quotation. Following this, Clerk to obtain 3 quotations for consideration.

6.4 Fallen Tree in Cemetery

The Parish Council have been advised that the fallen tree in the cemetery needs complete removal; not just the fallen bow. The tree is of significant age and has become a liability in its current state. As the tree is now deemed unsafe, work to remove it must be a priority. Three quotations had been requested but only one had been received. Therefore, due to the urgency of the works, it was unanimously agreed that the quotation for £770 ex VAT from Charlie Vince. If access to the cemetery can be arranged through the Dole field this cost may be reduced. Councillor Capps highlighted several other trees that require attention due to overhanging bows and also the hedge encroaching on the pathway. Councillor Capps agreed to revise the works list and confirm access arrangements. Clerk to then contact Charlie Vince to revise quotation.

6.5 Bent netball posts at the MUGA

The netball posts have been damaged at the MUGA. Councillor Capps will look to see if the posts can be straightened without replacement. If this is not possible, it was unanimously agreed that replacement posts should be purchased at the earliest opportunity to avoid further disruption to the village sports teams that use them on a regular basis. This expenditure was proposed by Councillor Scott, seconded by Councillor Pett and unanimously agreed.

6.6 Tree Works in the Reading Room Garden

Councillor Murphy commented that Barneys had reported large branches falling from the trees in the Reading Room garden. Pictures have been requested to assist in identifying the problematic trees. It was noted that the trees would be inspected again in early 2022.

7. Financial Statement for October 2021. 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 2021.

8. Payments for approval. The following payments were approved:
(Proposed Councillor Pett, seconded by Councillor Capps)

Payments previously approved and paid since 4th October 2021

1.	The Mower Shed (Invoice 1086)	£120.00
2.	The Mower Shed (Invoice 1090)	£120.00
3.	SSE (DD 18 th Oct 2021)	£106.33

Cheques/ Bank Transfers payable November 2021

1.	Clerk's expenses for October 2021	£24.38
2.	HMRC - PAYE (period ending 5 th Dec 21)	£10.80
3.	Buchans Landscaping & Grounds Maintenance	£292.84
4.	Glasdon Uk Ltd (Purchase of new picnic bench for playing field As agreed at item 6.2 of minutes dated 4 th Oct 2021)	£992.26
5.	Mr R McIntosh (Garden of Remembrance)	£7.50
6.	bb+c architects	

	<i>(Feasibility study on RR extension Initial payment for a third of fixed fee)</i>	£1298.80
7.	walker&turpin Consultants <i>RR asbestos survey</i>	£450.00
8.	Mr M Capps – <i>Purchase of clips to repair PC sign in park</i>	£15.52
9.	Caretaker Salary –November 2021 <i>(28th November 2021)</i>	£684.18
10.	Clerk’s Salary – November 2021 <i>(28th November 2021)</i>	£718.25

Automated Payments payable November 2021

1.	DD	BT – Broadband Reading Room <i>(11th November 2021)</i>	£30.16
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9. Precept 2022/23 A summary of receipts and payments had been circulated together with a proposed budget. Basic annual costs for next year were estimated to be £37,080.00. This means that if the precept remains unchanged, the Parish Council would be spending more than its income which is not in line with good governance. Councillors considered future costs of ongoing tree works, the agreed required contribution towards the LHI bid, and agreed to increase the current reserves set aside by 4% in line with inflation.

The precept amount for 2022/23 was discussed at length. It was noted that in comparison to other similar villages within HDC and despite the increase last year, the precept amount was very low. The Parish Council has several areas highlighted by residents that require expenditure. For example, the play equipment, provision for older children and traffic reduction/calming measures. Many of the facilities in the village are under increased usage as people spend more time in the immediate locality. An increase in the precept amount would allow the Parish Council to be able to make meaningful investment into the village; responding to the needs that had been highlighted by the NDP and would prevent the Parish Council from becoming impotent due to insufficient funding.

The cost of any increase would be mitigated due to the extra 40 houses at Dutton Gardens. In essence, the increase would be split between a greater number of houses. Taking this into consideration, an increase of £4000 would mean that there would be no tangible increase in the amounts payable by households in the village; the difference effectively being bourn by the new houses.

Taking these additional considerations into account alongside reserves and known expenses, Councillor Scott proposed raising the precept to £39,000, an increase of £4,000 on last year. Seconded by Councillor Pett and unanimously agreed. The budget for 2022/23 was discussed and will be formally agreed at the next meeting.

10. Highways

Councillors reported no new potholes but raised the following issues:

10.1 The cracked manhole cover on the cross roads of Fox Street/Caxton Road still has not been repaired despite being reported to Highways on several occasions. County Councillor Ferguson has been out to visit the site and has also reported it. Clerk to contact Highways again as a matter of urgency.

10.3 Roots of trees have caused bumps along the footpath on Caxton Road between Fox Street and Audley Close which are worsening. These have previously been reported but Clerk to raise again with Highways.

10.4 There are two new potholes on Mill Road, both are previous repairs. Clerk to report to Highways.

10.5 Flooding in Waresley Road is now occurring every time that it rains. Despite repeatedly being flagged on the portal, no action has been taken. The Parish Council will continue to ensure that all outstanding issues raised are not removed/dropped until they have been resolved.

11. Correspondence

11.1 Councillors noted the correspondence received from Gamlingay Parish Council around the Strategic Cycle Link (Bedford to Cambridge). Councillors agreed to support the idea in principle but had concerns about the proposed route as Waresley Road is narrow and prone to flooding. Clerk to request further information on implementation.

11.2 Councillors formally acknowledged receipt of a letter received from the tenant of the Reading Room Cottage. This will be discussed in closed session.

12. Consultations

12.1 Landscape and Townscape SPD: Consultation Draft 2021

Councillors unanimously agreed to give the information provided further consideration, voting unanimously to review at December's meeting.

13. Planning

13.1 PARISH COUNCIL CONSULTATION – APPLICATION REF. 21/02285/HHFUL

Cartlodge, widening of existing dropped kerb and ancillary development

18 Middle Street Great Gransden Sandy SG19 3AD

Councillors agreed to recommend 'Approval' on the grounds that there were no reasons to object. (Proposed Councillor Scott, seconded by Councillor Capps). Councillors wished to note their surprise that the proposed works had not required listed building consent given their location within the curtilage of a listed building.

13.2 PARISH COUNCIL CONSULTATION – APPLICATION REF. 21/02306/HHFUL

Installation of an Air Sourced Heatpump at the rear exterior of our property, to replace existing oil boiler.

8 Crow Tree Street Great Gransden Sandy SG19 3AZ.

The above planning application had been received too late for inclusion on this Agenda.

Therefore, a meeting of the planning committee will be convened on Wednesday 10th November at 7:30pm via Zoom to discuss.

14. Review of HR Policies and Procedures through external consultancy – Update .

In line with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 this item was considered in closed session.

15. Review of Payroll Outsourcing contract.

In line with the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 this item was considered in closed session.

16. Date of next Meeting.

The Next Meeting has been arranged for Monday 6th December 2021 at 7:30pm

This meeting closed at 8:52pm.