

GREAT GRANSDEN PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Parish Meeting held on 4th April 2022

Those present were:

Giles Scott Chairman

Nick Ginn Vice Chairman

Diane Taylor Locum Clerk

Michael Capps Parish Councillor

Cathy Davis Parish Councillor

Vikki Murphy Parish Councillor

Peter King Parish Councillor

Andrew Pett Parish Councillor

James Catmur Parish Councillor

Nigel Day Parish Councillor

District Councillor Richard West

And 7 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.

3. Declarations of Interest. Declarations of interest were made in relation to two planning applications:

Cllr Pett declared an interest in item 18.3, 4 Baldwins Manor, as owner of the property.

Cllr Capps declared an interest in item 18.4, Barns East Street, as the owner of the site.

4. Minutes of the previous monthly meeting held on the 7th March 2022 were approved and signed accordingly by the Chairman.

5. OPEN FORUM. The meeting was closed for 17 minutes.

District Councillor West spoke about community assets and the frustration with HDC not having been seen to provide help with keeping the Crown & Cushion Public House open. He also spoke about the Sand Road development; the enforcement officer dealing with the matter will leave her role shortly but both the off-site works and the lighting issue remains unresolved. It was made clear to the planning authority that there was not enough land in the ownership of the developer to build a safe junction. The lighting condition written by HDC proved to be unacceptable and needs to be revisited with the developer to produce a rural scheme not an urban one.

A number of residents raised concerns on the use of the Muga, seeking an update on the questions raised at the last meeting, which remain unanswered. A request was also made for a sub-committee to be set up to facilitate dialogue between the Parish Council and the concerned residents. The chairman confirmed that all the questions were being collated and a draft response will be circulated; decisions have to be debated and resolved at meetings. The present commercial use relates to a circuit training class for local residents and there is no plan to extend the commercial use of the Muga. Concern was raised that the current circuit training provider was advertising the MUGA as his location to attract further customers. The Parish Council will investigate and take any action they feel is required.

A resident raised concerns about the on-going closure of the Crown & Cushion Public House. In September the Parish Council committed to supporting any group campaigning to get the pub re-opened. A committee has been formed and is seeking the support of the Parish Council.

6. Matters Arising

6.1 Neighbourhood Plan (NDP). Cllr King spoke of the responses received to date, of which only 2 do not support the NDP. There have been some very constructive comments and these responses will be looked at to see whether anything needs changing. Statutory bodies and consultants are now responding as well. The consultation closes at 5pm on 12th April.

6.2 Future Funding for Playground Area. Cllrs Murphy and Davis reported that the sub-committee had met with 2 playground advisers. Both had raised maintenance of the safety

surfaces. The key challenges were taking into account the equipment already there and providing more equipment that is all inclusive. Although a lot of the existing equipment is antique, some of it is well made and in good condition; the remainder of the equipment will need updating, repairing and adding to. Additional Funding sources will be needed due to the high estimated cost. A third playground adviser has also been contacted. Once we have this additional plan/estimate a plan will be drawn up for the best way forward for Council consideration and approval.

6.3. Mandene Gardens Play Area. The developer of the new build properties is paying the CIL funding to HDC. As HDC will be funding the new play equipment, the play area will be HDC's. The Parish Council will need to be consulted about the proposed equipment. Further information will be sought from the District Council.

6.4. Her Majesty the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Cllr Capps reported that the tree will be delivered on Thursday. A group of councillors have volunteered to help with the planting. Councillors agreed to change the location of the tree to the opposite corner of the field where it is more level. This is preferable if a seat is to be installed around the tree at a later date.

6.5. Tyres along Sand Road. Cllr Scott reported that the owner had intended the area to be fenced, but had been unable to find someone to install the panels. Cllr Pett, having spoken to the owner, reported that the fence will be removed as the owner intends to plant a hedge.

6.6. Commercial Use of Muga. Cllr Scott explained that a response to the questions raised will be made in the coming days. The adopted policy for commercial use of the Muga is on the website.

7. Recruitment of a replacement clerk. Only one enquiry had been made. There appears to be no local interest and out-sourced locum services will be investigated. Local Parish Councils will also be contacted.

8. Financial Statement for March 2022. 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 March 2022.

9. Cheques for approval. The following payments were approved:
(Proposed Cllr Scott, seconded by Cllr Pett)

Payments previously approved and paid since 7th March 2022
(Approved at item 9 of minutes dated 12th April 2021)

1.	GGPCC	PC Annual Contribution	£1600.00
2.	Roundabout	PC Annual Contribution	£140.00
3.	Old Chapel Graveyard	PC Annual Contribution	£130.00

Cheques/ Bank Transfers payable April 2022

1.	RFO expenses for March 2022	£24.38
2.	<i>HMRC - PAYE (period ending 5th May 22)</i>	<i>£0.00</i>
3.	Deepdale Trees Ltd (Jubilee Tree)	£270.00
4.	Reading Room Committee (Reimbursement - Cleaning of the RR inv 686)	£131.67
5.	Reading Room Committee (Reimbursement - Cleaning of the RR inv 687)	£80.00
6.	Reading Room Committee (Reimbursement – Hire of RR for NDP inv 677)	£71.40
7.	South Cambs District Council (Dole field rates 2022-23)	£154.69

8.	Buchans Landscaping and Grounds Maintenance	£218.42
9.	Human Capital Dept (Retained HR Support)	£178.80
10.	Ms M Dugdale (Refund for relinquishment of cemetery plots 348 & 359)	£95.00
11.	Caretaker Salary – April 2022 (28 th April 2022)	£577.40
12.	RFO Salary – April 2022 (28 th April 2022)	£404.48*
13.	Locum Clerk Fee and expenses March 2022 Mrs D Taylor	£690.00

Automated Payments payable April 2022

1.	DD	BT – Broadband Reading Room (11 th April 2022)	£31.93
2.	DD	SSE (DD 16 th April 2022)	TBC**

*To include back-dated payments in line with increase from April 2021.

**Bill not received in time for meeting date but SSE contract remains unchanged.

10. Review of Cemetery Charges. These were last increased in 2016. It was proposed by Cllr Scott, seconded by Cllr Pett and carried unanimously to keep the charges unchanged so that:-

Purchase of grave space for burial to stay at £70

Purchase of grave space for cremation to stay at £70

Purchase of cremated remains space to stay at £30

Interment of still born child to stay at £25

Interment of a body more than 1 month old to stay at £42

Interment of cremated remains from to stay at £33

Approval of headstone and inscription to stay at £42

Approval of inscription on tablet in ashes area to stay at £27

Approval of an additional inscription to stay at £21

Searching burial records remains at a minimum charge of £15 plus £15 per hour of clerk's time over 1 hour. Charges will continue to be increased by 100% for those residing outside of the village.

Payment for Churchyard Maintenance. The Parish Council is responsible for this closed churchyard and pays the PCC for maintaining it. The PCC organises volunteers to carry out the work. It was unanimously agreed that the payments for the churchyard increase by £100 to £1,700pa.

Payment for Old Chapel Graveyard Maintenance. The Parish Council is responsible for this closed burial ground. It was unanimously agreed that the payment should be increased to £140pa.

Contribution to Roundabout Costs. Councillors unanimously agreed that the contribution should remain at £140pa.

Review of Clerk's Core Hours. This will be considered on the appointment of a new clerk.

Cemetery Grass Cutting. It was unanimously agreed to accept the quote from The Mower Shed of £130 per cut exclusive of vat for 2022. (Proposed Cllr Pett, seconded Cllr Scott).

11. Review of Risk Management Policy, asset check and risk assessment. The policy document had been circulated and councillors agreed that no changes were necessary. The Risk assessment forms had also been circulated; this is ongoing, as councillors regularly check play

equipment when emptying the litter bins on the playing field. No paper record exists and councillors agreed to set up an online forum, whether a private facility on the website or another means of recording risks and repairs. Cllr Day agreed to look into this.

12. Review of Internal Control and Appointment of Internal Auditor Councillors reviewed the internal controls considering them to be adequate and effective taking into account, cheque signing, quarterly verification of bank reconciliations by a council member who is not a cheque signatory, consideration of the internal auditor's report and any matters raised and reviewing financial regulations. Councillors agreed to appoint LGS Services as internal auditor.

13. Approval of the Annual Governance Statement 2021/22 – Section 1 Councillors considered the Annual Governance Statement in Section 1, page 4 of the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2021/22. Each of the 9 statements were read out and unanimously approved by councillors, answering yes, to those numbered 1-9. Approval was proposed by Cllr Pett, seconded by Cllr Scott and unanimously agreed.

14. Reading Room Cottage Fencing. Two quotes had been obtained to replace the fencing and gate between the cottage and the Reading Room garden. One 6-foot panel had now been replaced and only a new gate and small section of fencing is needed. Councillors agreed to ask the contractors to requote unless a working party is able to obtain and fit a new gate.

Reading Room Garden Costs. Councillors agreed to reimburse the Reading Room committee costs of £35 fortnightly grass cut and a one off spring pruning of £160. (Proposed Cllr Scott, seconded Cllr Ginn).

15. Adoption of Code of Conduct. Cllr Pett criticised the new code for being too long and very negative, with no provision for councillors to exercise their own judgement. Cllr Pett offered to rewrite the code incorporating the positive points from the council's existing code into a new Code of Conduct. (Proposed Cllr Pett, seconded Cllr Scott).

16. Highways.

Cllr Catmur reported that the meeting with the Highways Officer was very positive, giving greater clarity about his role and what others did. There are ongoing difficulties including the standard of pot hole repairs. Various highways issues have been sprayed yellow for repair and the Highways Officer will monitor these. Waresley Road drainage on both sides of the road is still on the books and councillors will keep this under review. When reporting a highways issue, the advice is to take a photograph or video of the problem; when the matter is reported as resolved, this can be sent to the contractor if the problem persists. Councillors were advised that the collapsing drain in Church Street is not a highways issue. Councillors expressed disappointment that the officer could not undertake repairs to the edge of Crow Tree Street, on the basis that this area is not part of the highway. The Highways Officer agreed to follow up correspondence with the former officer concerning new safety signage for Meadow Road. Councillors agreed the meeting was a very valuable exercise and would like to repeat this in the future. Councillors will follow up on the promised repairs in the summer.

Cllr Capps reported that the work to fell the elm trees in Church Street has been completed. It is hoped the remaining tree work will be completed at the end of the month.

Cllr Capps raised the matter of repairs to the Lychgate which councillors had previously agreed to investigate. Quotes are still needed.

17. Correspondence.

17.1. Crown & Cushion Public House. There had been correspondence from residents about the continued closure of the village pub. There had been a recent village meeting which some councillors had attended. Whilst the pub remains registered as an Asset of Community Value

(ACV), until July 2023, it was agreed that the process to re-register should commence to avoid a lapse. HDC had been contacted about a change of use and the parish council has sought guidance. The issue is due to be discussed by the planning enforcement officer as to whether there has been a material change of use. Councillors discussed whether the outbuildings had been on site for more than four years and the information indicating that this did not apply anyway to listed buildings in a conservation area as planning regulations and guidance had to be followed regardless of the time elapsed since their construction. Cllr Ginn proposed that a formal letter is sent to the owners to request a meeting with the Parish Council. Seconded by Andrew Pett and agreed unanimously.

17.2. Mill Weir (closed season). The water bailiff had advised that the closed season (15th March to 16th June) only applies to running water, rivers and fen drains. Some lakes have an inlet and outlet to rivers, bringing them under the closed season. Councillors agreed that a closed season did not apply to the village pond.

17.3. Wildlife Ponds. Councillors noted the letter advising on funding for ponds. There is already a pond at the allotment site but there is no other parish land that would benefit from a pond.

17.4. Obstruction on Dick and Dolls Lane. This has now been cleared.

17.5. Citizens Advice Rural Cambs. Councillors noted the letter requesting a donation.

18. Planning

18.1. Hayfield Homes Development, Sand Road, Great Gransden.

Light pollution – councillors noted that the matter is no further forward. Enforcement cannot take action as permission was granted for the additional lights. There are no breaches in planning control for the lights. HDC is still looking into the shades. The difficulty is that planning conditions are not a matter for consultation with parish councils. Two planning applications were made, 1 for off-site works and one for on-site, with each application including provision for 3 lights. There is no need for 6 lights in this area which will cause light pollution. A reduction in the number of lights will save energy costs. Councillors agreed to write to the Head of Planning about the duplication of street lighting. Cllrs Pett, Catmur, Murphy & Capps agreed to co-write the letter.

HDC has advised that a further application will be submitted by the developer to address the reasons for refusal of the application to vary the condition for the off-site works. Once submitted, HDC will discuss with planning enforcement forum again to see if the District Council waits for determination again or proceed with any action. Enforcement anticipates awaiting determination of the new application if it addresses the reasons for refusal of the last application.

18.2. PARISH COUNCIL CONSULTATION – APPLICATION REF. 22/00386/LBC Installation of a wood burning stove and stainless steel liner in the existing fireplace and chimney flue, 1 Mill Road Great Gransden. Councillors unanimously agreed to recommend ‘Approval’ on the ground that it is a sensible upgrade. (Proposed Cllr Scott, seconded by Cllr Capps).

18.3. PARISH COUNCIL CONSULTATION –APPLICATION REF. 22/00048/TREE Yew - Reduce crown by approx 1.8m and remove broken branches to allow for better growth, 4 Baldwins Manor Great Gransden. (Cllr Pett left the meeting)

Councillors unanimously agreed to recommend ‘Approval’ on the ground that it is a sensible repair to a tree. (Proposed Cllr Capps, seconded by Cllr Scott)

18.4. PARISH COUNCIL CONSULTATION – APPLICATION REF. 22/00390/FUL Conversion and refurbishment of former agricultural buildings to provide four dwellings to include associated development, Barns East Street Great Gransden. (Cllr Capps left the meeting)

Councillors had considered the listed building application last month. Approval was unanimously recommended on the same grounds as before; (1) it is a planning gain in the small

settlement of Great Gransden and (2) it is bringing a heritage building back into use. (Proposed Cllr Scott, seconded by Cllr Pett).

19. HR Committee Update.

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

20. Date of next Meeting

The Next Meeting has been arranged for Wednesday 18th May 2022 at 7:30pm

The **Annual Parish Meeting** will be held on **Thursday 21st April 2022 at 7:30pm.**

This meeting closed at 9:18pm

DRAFT