

Draft until signed
Minutes of Graveley Parish Council (GPC) Meeting
Thursday 14th January 2021 at 7.30pm, held remotely via Zoom

Present: P Wood (PW) (Chair), W Walker (WW) (Vice-Chair), A Carver (AC) (Councillor), S Chapman (SC) (Councillor)

Attending: S Etherington-Meech (SEM) (Parish Clerk/RFO), Cllr Nick Wright (NW) (District Councillor), Cllr Mandy Smith (MS) (County Councillor), Cllr Mark Howell (MH) (District Councillor), 3 members of the public

1. To Accept Apologies for Absence

Cllr C Bentley sent his apologies as he was unable to attend the meeting due to illness.

2. To Accept Parish Councillors Declarations of Interest for Matters on the Agenda

No declarations of interest were declared.

3. To Agree to hold a Public Forum

Members of the public were in attendance to raise the issue of flooding in the village. WW explained that the third pond that has not been dredged burst its banks, overflowed, and created a large pool in the road that pours down his neighbours drive and on 23rd December 2020 water was just an inch from the bottom of their front door and is bad again today. WW suggested two ways forward, if GPC can urge highways to take these issues seriously and come out to investigate and/or GPC invest in some flood defences for the parish that could be deployed at short notice. It was suggested that this could be a consideration for the next LHI application in order to protect roads and residential properties.

WW confirmed that this is not a new issue and residents have documentation dating back to 2003 that includes detailed information and analysis of this ongoing issue. It was highlighted in the first diagnosis that the pond had been infilled by 25% and was no longer able to cope with water off the land and drains also cannot cope. Residents advised that they have reported issues on 23rd December 2020 and today and they were informed by SCDC this morning that alert time will only be if water comes into their house.

It was raised that the dredging of the third pond was recently discussed and was discounted due to concerns from a neighbour that it would affect the foundations of their barn, however, it was raised in the meeting that residents built their barn as a massive construction knowing its proximity to the pond. AC and PW agreed that this an issue that needs moving forward and PW believes the answer is to get the drains sorted, WW agreed that the drains need investigating by highways but also GPC could consider supplies for flood prevention. MS advised that SCDC will distribute reusable sandbags, and CCC lead local flood authority will be investigating all flooding issues that have occurred and their email is floodandwater@cambridgeshire.gov.uk, MS requested that she is copied into any email sent. MS informed that some villages have flood protection teams which are ready to assist if needed and now many councils are wanting to set their own teams up and therefore CCC are discussing this with the Environment Agency for how to move this forward.

PW mentioned obtaining larger drainage maps for the parish, however, MS explained that this would not be quick presently due to logistics during the pandemic. SC requested that this issue be included as a regular item as he is aware of stables in the parish that have flooded also. Residents raised concern that they felt the point was being missed and that a major survey of drains in the parish is required and improvements made where necessary. MS agreed but highlighted that in the short term measures should be in place including such as sandbags.

4. To Approve the Minutes of Meeting held on Thursday 26th November 2020

Point 11. g. should read Helen Taylor not Helen Bradbury amendment made to minutes and it was RESOLVED that the minutes be approved and signed by the chair as a true and accurate copy.

5. Matters Arising from the Minutes, Report of any actions and Resolutions from last meeting – See Appendix 1

5.1 SEM advised that this item is in hand, she has worked with Keith McConnell (KM) and data has been collected and will be submitted by 31st January 2021.

- 5.2 MS advised that footpaths have been reported and are on a list of works to be carried out and she will chase up, MS advised that she has also reported the issues raised at the last meeting. SC queried if there was an update of blocked drains from James Broder, SEM to chase up.
- 5.3 MS advised that she does not believe a tree survey of the whole village will be carried out, however, PW requested that MS still makes enquiries in this regard. MS requested that her and Denis Vacher are included in any emails to James Broder.
- 5.4 PW advised that he had not yet managed to upload the maps.
- 5.5 This was an item for Cllr Bentley, moved to next agenda.
- 5.6 SEM advised that Ted Allgood is to send information required via post and SEM is to produce documents for L Abbott to complete.
- 5.7 SEM advised that she has spoken with KM and he informed her that ownership of the ponds was not resolved, and it has been presumed that they are the responsibility of GPC. PW questioned if GPC could get this in writing, NW advised GPC to contact the land registry for advice and guidance on the procedure for registering the ponds as their own. **Action** - PW to contact land registry to begin this process.

AC advised that he received an email from KM in relation to lease documents for the parish land and it was confirmed that no formal lease document has ever been produced as it was complex due to the tenants building stables on the land. **Action** – AC to investigate a basic lease tenancy that will protect the tenants as well as GPC. Clerk advised that she may be able to source a document also.

- 5.8 Cllr Bentley did source the list from Helen Taylor and circulated it to GPC. PW advised that the majority of streetlights have now been upgraded with just freestanding lights to be completed. SEM advised that GPC will be notified by Helen Taylor once works are fully completed.
- 5.9 Clerk advised that KM is just awaiting the final proof of the village history booklet with amendments and once completed he will instruct for the stapled version to be printed.
- 5.10 Clerk advised that Cllr Bentley has this in hand as she has been copied into emails.
- 5.11 SC advised that he is aware that a draft is being produced and he will chase this up.
- 5.12 Clerk advised that this is an ongoing issue that she has not had a chance to action yet.
- 5.13 PW has now carried out the woodworm treatment and he is to check that it has worked.
- 5.14 WW advised that he could source a tankard and requested ideas for engraving.

6. **To Accept a Report from County and District Councillors**

NW advised that SCDC do issue sandbags (which are new and highly effective) and residents should call when they think it may come into their property and not to wait until water is actually entering their property, he advised that Chris Ball is the operative on the ground who distributes the sandbags.

NW also advised that he had just received a briefing from SCDC regarding vaccines for Covid-19 and there are to be three ways the vaccine will be delivered. Firstly, primary care hospitals will switch over from healthcare workers, the next method is through GP surgeries (5 sites already working and nine others to join soon) and the final method is through major large vaccination sites for which one to two are planned to be working by the end of January in South Cambs.

WW requested an update on planning at SCDC from NW and he advised that there has been an external peer review of planning services and that he is on the committee and is very keen for parish councils to have more involvement with planning as there has been a reluctance from planning officers to release things to parish councils and they just want comments, but they ultimately want to make the decisions. PW requested that NW put forward that GPC would like to know why the decisions are made as GPC feel that their comments are completely ignored and would like this clarified. NW highlighted that there has never really been any feedback from planning other than to refer to material considerations and one area being considered if training for parish councillors to assist them being more selective with their comments.

MH advised that the hotel on the A14 in Bar Hill is currently being used as a truck stop for non-British nationals to be tested for Covid-19 on their way back to Europe, stopping in the hotel and isolating in a room to await their test results before being released.

MH also highlighted the latest update in relation to East West Rail and the Cambridge to Cambourne connection and the three major programmes that have been put forward. Firstly, the connection of the Black Cat and Caxton Gibbet roundabouts, secondly the suggestion of a southern train station in the south part of Cambourne in front of the place known as the Manor House and thirdly a northern station on the northern side of the A428 as you come off to go to Cambourne at the land on the left-hand side, this is the preferred option of Cambourne Parish Council and many others. MH highlighted that wherever the station is located houses will be built around it and if the train station goes to the north of Cambourne its almost guaranteed another major development like Cambourne will be built to the north of the station. However, if a station is located to the south major development will likely be along the ribbon of the rail station towards Cambridge and next week East West Rail will be consulting on routes.

MH highlighted the Cambridge to Cambourne metro also and the two route options put forward. Firstly, the southern route out of Cambridge which would go along the M11 close to Coton and Madingley Hill and come out by Madingley Mulch along Hardwick Road and off to Cambourne (estimated timescale for completion 2-3 years). Secondly, the Mayor's preferred route out of Cambridge is off towards Madingley across M11 in front of Madingley cemetery cutting through part of 800 wood in Madingley village and along the northern alignment of the A428 (estimated time for completion 10-11 years).

7. To Discuss Planning Matters

Remote decisions on planning applications were made via email and voting records retained.

a. Applications received for consideration

i. 20/04483/FUL - The Barn, Offord Rd, PE19 6PP -Part demolition of existing potato store and conversion to a single private dwelling

PW proposed no objections, SC seconded and all councillors RESOLVED no objections to this planning application.

b. Decisions received from South Cambs District Council – no decisions received

c. Greater Cambridge Local Plan & Call for Sites – Cllr Bentley to provide feedback from workshop attendance on 1st December 2020

As Cllr Bentley is not in attendance this is to be discussed at the next meeting.

8. Village Hall

8.1 To discuss the lease/EPC/energy rating improvement works – date to be set to meet with Rachael Lamb (Diocese) and contractors. Cllr Wood to advise of email discussion with Nigel di Castiglione regarding lease renewal, works required etc.

PW advised he has liaised with Nigel di Castiglione regarding renewal of the village hall lease and unfortunately, we are no further to a solution and we are still awaiting Racheal Lamb to arrange for contractors to visit the village hall and provide a quotation for upgrade works. PW advised that we have received the Covid-19 grant monies from the government for the village hall, however, the view of GPC is that the Diocese should carry out these works in order for the lease to be renewed. PW explained that GPC are unable to apply for any grants for improvements at the village hall until a 10-year lease is in place. AC advised that although the lease has not been renewed GPC must continue to pay their rent as non-payment will still be a breach of their lease.

GPC agreed that they want to keep and improve the village hall to make it a more useable facility and that the current situation with the EPC certificate and the lease renewal is extremely frustrating and needs action in order to move forward. WW suggested a solution is for the Diocese to apply for exemption if no-one has any funds for works to be completed and AC also suggested that if GPC do pay out for some works to be completed that they request a fix on rental payments for a set period. SC advised that GPC must be patient, however, GPC highlighted that the lease expired around 2016 and it is ridiculous that this issue has continued for so long and has still not be resolved. **Action** – PW to write an email response to Nigel di Castiglione and clerk to contact Cambs ACRE for advice.

9. Matters for discussion/correspondence received

9.1 For info - Refreshed pre-application planning service – went live Wednesday 2nd December 2020

9.2 For info – Stephen Kelly (Planning) email re: Thakeham’s Proposals for South-West Cambridgeshire Development

10. Consultations

- a. **To consider and approve an objection document for the Luton Flightpath consultation – deadline 5th February 2021**
SC to chase Cllr Bentley for draft document.
- b. **To consider the Highways Service Stakeholder survey – deadline 31st January 2021**
GPC agreed no comments to be made.
- c. **To consider Sunnica Energy Farm Burwell – deadline 29th January 2021**
GPC agreed no comments to be made

11. Finance and Policy

- a. **To accept account review to date and bank reconciliation**
Bank reconciliation (see Appendix 2) and finance spreadsheet were circulated to all councillors before the meeting, GPC RESOLVED to accept and approve the accounts and bank reconciliation.
- b. **To advise of payments received**
 - i. **Annual Parish Land Rental Payment - £500.00**
- c. **Remote decisions on the following payments to hand includes standing order & direct debits were made between 26th November 2020 to 8th January 2021.**
 - i. **Six Village Newsletter Donation – £100.00 agreed 26/11/20 – LGA 1972, s.142**
 - ii. **Dry Drayton Parish Council – Contribution to Zoom subscription £72.00 agreed 26/11/20 – LGA 1972, Schedule 12, paragraph 15**
 - iii. **E.on Energy – (DDM) – Village Hall Electricity 07/10-07/11 - £13.42 - LGA 1972, s.133**
 - iv. **Cambridge Water Business – (DDM) – Village Hall Water Rates - £60.82 – LGA 1972, s.133**
 - v. **SSE (DDM) – Streetlighting Energy 03/11-01/12 - £127.55 - Parish Councils Act 1957, s.3; Highways Act 1980, s.301.**
 - vi. **E.on Energy – (DDM) – Village Hall Electricity 07/11-07/12 - £14.66 - LGA 1972, s.133**
 - vii. **Unity Bank – Service Charge - £18.00 - LGA 1972, s.111**
- d. **To approve the following payments to hand**
 - i. **S Etherington-Meech – Clerks overtime/expenses (Period 9) - £73.29 - All councillors agreed payment - RESOLVED. Payment to be approved online - LGA 1972, s.112 & s.151**
- e. **To discuss and approve the budget and 2021/22 precept (was discussed after item i) chairman moved item so that the public could leave if they wished**
SEM shared the budget on the screen. SEM explained that even for a parish as small as Graveley the precept is considerably low when the basic annual expenditure is more than the precept meaning the reserves are being worn away every year with a few thousand pounds from reserves required each year. SEM provided a comparison of a parish with similar amenities and of similar size with a precept double that of GPC. GPC agreed that there is some money in reserves, however, the precept should reflect the minimum expenditure requirement.

Councillors reviewed the budget figures and annual expenditure is approximately £12,500 if grants received and contingency are excluded meaning that not even 50% is being covered by the precept that is currently received. It was discussed that a target precept in the region of £8,500 was more realistic if the Cotton Wind Farm grant monies are included, these are expected to be a fairly steady and consistent income fund for the next 10 to 15 years which will assist getting to a target precept figure as it is not tenable to increase substantially in one

year. AC stated that more than a 20% increase is not possible with the current situation with some residents that maybe struggling, however, some action is required, and a 20% increase will only increase the precept to £7,434.00.

SC highlighted that GPC has received some exceptional income during the Covid-19 pandemic in excess of £10,000 from both the Government Village Hall Grant and Trotter Foundation which they will not receive again, he explained that businesses must run on consistent monies and with £12,500 as a base line GPC should consider closing the gap over three years. PW proposed that if a 20% increase is applied over the next four years the amount of money in the bank would be lowered to a more reasonable amount as there are reserves to be spent but the community will not then be burdened in one go, AC seconded, and all councillors agreed to a precept figure of £7,434.00 (a 20% increase on the 2020/21 precept). GPC finally stated that they recognise that there is a significant shortfall in operating costs versus income and resolved to make it balance over a four-to-five-year period with an expected 20% rise every year during this period. **Action** – SEM to submit precept requirement to SCDC.

f. **To discuss and inform of the correct processes for the instruction of village works, parish council spending and VAT reclaims**

SEM informed GPC that they cannot issue orders or instructions as individuals not even the Chairman and that everything must be dealt with through the clerk and be resolved as a council at a meeting. Correct procedures must be adhered to as per the Standing Orders for the parish council and the clerk needs to confirm that the parish council a power to make a payment. SEM also highlighted that if invoices for works are not correctly addressed to the parish council then she is unable to claim the VAT back on that invoice.

g. **To discuss CAPALC response and approve reimbursement of £160.59 for plaque renovation to village sign and to discuss action required for brickwork repairs to the bottom of the village sign**

SEM explained to GPC that she sought advice from CAPALC and as no minutes are in place and there is no record of agreement to the design and cost of the plaque renovation on the village sign the only way that GPC can make the payment is via goodwill through the Local Government Act (LGA) 1972 S.137.

The chairman invited Janet Parsons (JP) to speak to explain the background to this item. JP shared her screen to show the newly renovated and erected plaque and explained that after the old one broke she was concerned it could have been pulled off and the plaque and its text lost, Les Wheeler prepared the history, and it may not have been possible to trace the text again. JP explained that the reimbursement includes a first effort that went wrong with an unsuitable engraver that refused to refund costs even though their work was not satisfactory. JP stated that she has lived in the parish for over 40 years and suggested many projects to the parish in the past but understands that in the future she would have to bring projects to GPC for them to decide and she will also contact the engraver of the final plaque to request a VAT invoice in the parish council's name.

PW proposed full reimbursement for the plaque renovation, SC seconded and it was RESOLVED by all councillors and was agreed for spending under LGA 1972, s.137 as the plaque is a piece of village history. PW advised that GPC would require a quotation for repair to the brickwork of the village sign and **Action** PW to contact Ted Allgood for a quotation.

h. **To review and approve documents – Social Media Policy/Lone Worker Policy/Press & Media Policy/Complaints Procedure**

Cllrs approved the complaints procedure, however, amendments and further review is required before approving the other documents.

i. **To discuss and approve renewal with Cambridge Water Business for the village hall water supply**

RESOLVED by GPC to only renew for a year as the village hall lease has not yet been renewed.

12. To accept notices and matter for the next agenda

13. Date and time of next meeting – To be agreed at the meeting

Wednesday 10th March 2021, Thursday 6th May 2021 (Annual Parish & Annual Parish Council Meeting)
decided not to book any further ahead until guidance is provided regarding virtual meetings.

EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND PRESS

That in view of the confidential nature of the business about to be transacted, it is advisable in the public interest that the public and press be excluded, and they are instructed to withdraw, Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960.

14. To discuss clerk’s pension arrangements and annual staff appraisal

Included in confidential minutes

Meeting closed at 10.14pm

Signed.....Chairman

Date.....

DRAFT

Appendix 1

GRAVELEY PARISH COUNCIL ACTION LIST FROM MEETING HELD ON 26/11/2020

5.1	Cotton Farm Wind Farm – Community Benefit Fund 2020/21– Keith McConnell (KM) & SEM to submit evidence of grant monies spent	KM/SEM
5.2	Bad repair of Manor Farm footpath, James Broder update on the blocked drains Toseland Rd/Offord Rd junction in particular Rectory Farm, concerns over footpath/barrier Offord Rd near Duck End and official footpath sign removed and not reinstated	MS
5.3	MS to contact James Broder to request a tree safety survey for Graveley	MS
5.4	Uploading of drainage/ditch maps	PW
5.5	Village Improvement Works – update on paint sourcing and painting of roundels	CB
5.6	Update on cleaning and grass cutting contracts and liability insurance	SEM
5.7	Investigate ownership of village ponds and lease document for parish council land with KM	SEM
5.8	List and upgrade from Helen Taylor at SCDC for LED upgrade on streetlights	CB
5.9	Village History Booklet – final proof agreed, and KM instructed for print with stapled version	PW
5.10	Collation and submission of traffic data from MVAS	CB
5.11	Complaint letter drafted in relation to planning objections ignored for Winrowe Barn	CB
5.12	Enquiry with Unity Trust re: opening of a savings account	SEM
5.13	Woodworm treatments carried out at the village hall	PW
5.14	Gift options for outgoing members of GPC	WW

Appendix 2

GRAVELEY PARISH COUNCIL
December 2020 Bank Reconciliation

	£
Unity Trust current account on 20 th November 2020	£29,153.52
<u>Less</u> payments presented from 21 st November 2020 to 31 st December 2020	£1,536.20
<u>Plus</u> , receipts presented from 21 st November 2020 to 31 st December 2020	£500.00
Closing bank account on 31 st December 2020	£28,117.32
<u>Less outstanding direct payments not yet subtracted</u>	£0.00
Balance carried forward on 31 st December 2020	£28,117.32

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Notes:

Sarah Etherington-Meech

RFO

14th January 2021