

GREAT BLAKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council Wednesday 10th May 2017 at 7.00pm in the Parish Room, Stowmarket Road, Great Blakenham.

PRESENT: Councillors Steve Plume (Chairman), Karen Peters (Deputy Chairman), Widge Bowman, David Jones.
Clerk to the Council – Janet Gobey.
County and District Councillor John Field.
Six members of the public.

The Chairman opened the Meeting at 7.00pm.

1. To elect the Chairman of Great Blakenham Parish Council.
Cllr. Plume was nominated by Cllr. Peters. This was seconded by Cllr Bowman and unanimously approved by Councillors.
2. To elect the Deputy Chairman of Great Blakenham Parish Council.
Cllr. Peters was nominated by Cllr. Plume. This was seconded by Cllr. Bowman and unanimously approved by Councillors.
3. To receive and approve any apologies for absence.
Apologies were received from District Councillor Welsby.
4. Declaration of any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests.
 - a. Councillors declaration of interest appropriate to any item on the agenda.
None.
 - b. To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interest (if any).
None
 - c. To grant any requests for dispensations as appropriate.
None.

5. Public Forum

- a. To receive the report from the County Councillor
Cllr. Field was not present at this stage of the Meeting.
- b. To receive reports from District Councillors
Neither District Councillor was present at this stage of the meeting.
- c. To receive questions from members of the public (allow 15 minutes).
A resident of Plummers Dell raised the issue of the Boardley and Roberts site and said that, amongst other problems, there was activity on the site outside the Normal Working Hours. This was resulting in noise, lighting coming on, traffic movements and was affecting the residents by disturbing their sleep and detracting from their quality of life. As a result, she and other neighbours wished to strongly register their objections to the new planning application for the site.
The Chairman thanked the resident for coming to the Meeting to raise her concerns and assured her that the Council would take their feedback into account when the planning application was discussed later in the Meeting.
A resident raised the issue of dog waste bins along the River Gipping footpath. He felt that a joint dog waste and litter bin could be sited near the bridge over the Gipping at the end of Mill Lane. It was agreed that this would be better on the Barham side of the river, but there could be an issue with access for emptying a bin there.
ACTION: Clerk to check the maximum distance from the road that dog waste bins can be situated. Other possible locations could be at the bottom of Chequers Rise or at the end of Plummers Dell.
There was a query about the possibility of a Parish Plan being developed for Great Blakenham, particularly with all the new developments.

6. Planning.

a. To consider the following planning applications.

1276 / 17	Location: 54 Chapel Lane, Great Blakenham IP6 0JZ	Proposal: Erection of a single storey rear extension and extended drop kerb access.
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Councillors agreed that they had no objections to this application.

1308 / 17	Location: Land at Plummers Dell, Gipping Road, Great Blakenham IP6 0JG	Proposal: Station a porta cabin & a metal container for storage use.
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Cllr. Peters said that she had visited the site and was opposed to the application. Cllr. Bowman said that parking is a hazard in Plummers Dell and this application would only worsen the situation. Councillors questioned the suitability of what appears to be a 24-hour operation next to a residential area, with the resulting noise, dust and light pollution. Councillors felt that these activities seem to contravene the spirit of the original planning application for the site and that the new planning application would have a serious impact on neighbours. Councillors unanimously agreed to oppose the application.

b. To note any planning determinations.

0943/17	Erection of first floor extension - 30 Mulberry Gardens, Great Blakenham IP6 0HU	Approved
0936/17	Change of use of building from Class B2 (General Industrial) to Class D2 (Assembly and Leisure) for use as a combat sports and personal training centre. - 3 Hydra Court, Orion Business Park, Addison Way, Great Blakenham IP6 0LW	Approved

Councillors noted these.

c. Any other planning matters for information only.

The Clerk said that two more planning applications had been approved, but that these had come too late to be included on the Agenda. One of them was the application for 130 houses on Stowmarket Road.

9. Governance

a. To consider and approve the Standing Orders.

Councillors approved these unanimously.

b. To consider and approve the Financial Regulations.

Councillors approved these unanimously.

c. To approve the leaflet for recruitment of new Councillors.

Councillors reviewed the draft leaflet. After some discussion, it was agreed that the leaflet should be made shorter and simpler.

ACTION: Cllr. Plume to produce a second draft for the June meeting.

d. To note the Clerk's extra hours.

There were no extra hours for April.

e. To note the Clerk's mileage.

It was noted that the Clerk's mileage was not available.

10. Allotments

a. To receive a progress report on the attempt to purchase the allotment land.

The Chairman said that no reply had been received from the agent or the landowners regarding the request to negotiate over the purchase of the allotments.

ACTION: Clerk to write again.

The Chairman said that, if necessary, the Council would consider looking for another piece of land to purchase for allotments, although not the land opposite, as it is too wet.

b. To receive a report on the occupancy of the allotments.

The Clerk reported that six allotments were currently unlet.

c. To consider maintenance issues at the allotments.

It was agreed that there was a need for some maintenance and improvement work at the allotments, including repairs to the taps and the fencing. However, with the current uncertainty about the lease, Councillors agreed that it was prudent to spend the minimum required on maintenance. A programme to improve the allotments would be considered once the long-term future of the allotments was clear.

The Clerk said that Stearn Farms were going to do some hedge trimming at the end of the footpath, although they had reminded the Council that maintenance of hedges was the Council's responsibility.

The Chairman said that the agent for Stearn Farms had asked that people should not use the field to get to their allotments once the hedge along the path was cut back.

ACTION: Clerk to put up a notice asking allotment holders to use the path.

d. To note the opening of a new account with Anglian Water Business.

The Clerk confirmed that the old Anglian Water account had been closed and that a new account had been opened with the successor company, Anglian Water Business.

11. Village Maintenance

a. To consider complaints about parking on Chequers Rise.

Cllr. Jones read out the response for Suffolk Constabulary to his letter about this issue. It appears that the police do not regard this as a priority matter for them, as no laws have been broken. After some discussion about road safety at the bottom of Chequers Rise, it was agreed that Highways should be contacted to see if they would install double yellow lines from the B113 up to the first drive.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Highways.

b. To consider quotes for installation of the new noticeboard.

Councillors considered the three quotes obtained by the Clerk. After discussion, it was unanimously agreed to accept the quote from Landmark Construction.

12. Churchyard and Cemetery.

a. To receive a progress report on the purchase of land for the extension of the Cemetery.

The Chairman reported back on his meeting with the landowners. It had been provisionally agreed that the Council could purchase a piece of land behind the Cemetery, rather than to the side. The exact size will depend upon whether it is possible to move or close the footpath across the field behind the Cemetery. It has been agreed with the landowner that the Council will pursue this.

ACTION: Clerk

Valuation of the land will take place after the footpath issue is resolved.

The Village Hall Committee have agreed to take the shed and will organise its removal. This will free up space within the current Cemetery.

The Chairman outlined his investigations into ground penetrating radar. He had established that it should be possible to use this to confirm with a reasonable degree of certainty which areas of the Cemetery were unused.

ACTION: Clerk to obtain quotes.

Cllr. John Field arrived at 8.05 pm. The Chairman asked Councillors if they would agree to stop the Meeting so that Cllr. Field could give his report Councillors agreed to this unanimously.

The Chairman congratulated Cllr. Field on his re-election as a County Councillor, saying that Cllr. Field was very visible and active both as a County and as a District Councillor. This was seconded by Cllr. Peters.

Cllr. Field highlighted the pressures on County budgets, caused by the recession and cuts in funding. This is being tackled by restructuring and cost cutting and this process is continuing. Cllr. Field sees the priorities for County and District action in Great Blakenham as being the pedestrian crossing on Stowmarket Road, resurfacing of Chapel Lane, drainage and flooding on the roads.

The Chairman asked if Cllr. Field had viewed the video showing that there was flooding on the B113 before the tree clearance work. Cllr. Field confirmed that he had seen it and said that the gullies along the road had been cleaned out, but it was now clear that there were major problems with road drainage in that area and that there was a lot of work to be done to solve the problems in several places along the road. He is hoping to arrange a site meeting with Highways to begin this process. There was a question about the pedestrian crossing. Cllr. Field said that the plans had been done, funding was in place and work was expected to start later this year.

The Chairman reopened the Meeting at 8.15 pm.

13. Training and Development for Councillors and Clerk

a. To note the following training already booked (if any).

None

b. To consider any other training requests.

None.

14. Finance

a. To approve the 2016/17 Accounts.

The Clerk presented the Annual Accounts for 2016/17. This was approved unanimously by Councillors.

b. To approve the Annual Audit Return - Section 1 Annual Governance Statement - for 2016/17.

The Clerk presented Section 1 of the Annual Audit Return. Councillors agreed unanimously to approve this and it was signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

c. To approve the Annual Audit Return – Accounting Statement – for 2016/17.

The Clerk presented Section 2 of the Annual Audit Return. Councillors agreed unanimously to approve this and it was signed by the Chairman and the Clerk.

d. To note the Council's Financial Report for April.

Councillors noted the Financial Report.

BANK BALANCES 28/4/2017

BUSINESS PREMIUM ACCOUNT - £15,721.86

COMMUNITY ACCOUNT - £56,984.71

TOTAL - £72,70.57

EXPENDITURE 31/3/17 TO 28/4/17

£1759.29 cleared cheques (plus uncleared cheques totalling £850.13) = **£2609.42**

INCOME 31/3/17 TO 28/4/17

£21917.56 (Precept - £19500.00. Burial fees - £240.00. VAT reclaim 21015/16 - £2177.56)

PROJECTED BALANCE AT 31/3/18

N/A

RESERVES (approved at January 2017 Extraordinary Meeting)

General Reserves

£15500

Earmarked Reserves

Purchase of land for Cemetery extension - £12500

Landscaping, fencing for Cemetery extension - £3000

Legal fees for Cemetery extension - £3000.

Cemetery gates - £2500

Election/referendum costs - £1750 (poll cards, election and count costs).

Purchase of a defibrillator - £1500

Purchase of allotment land - £10000

TOTAL EARMARKED RESERVES - £34250

TOTAL RESERVES - £49750

e. To note the following cheques signed out of Meeting.

None.

f. To consider approving and making the following payments:

Impact Landscaping	Churchyard and cemetery maintenance for April 2017	£546.00	LGA 1972 s214(6) LGA 1972, s.215
Great Blakenham Parish Room	Room hire (April 2017)	£20.00	LGA 1972 s111
Janet Gobey	Clerk's salary for April 2017(including extra hours for March and SnOasis Parish Alliance hours for February).	£744.39	LGA 1972 s111
M Sillett	Monthly street cleaning	£262.50	LGA 1972 s111
G Sillett	Monthly street cleaning and quarterly sign cleaning	£388.50	LGA 1972 s111
SALC	Annual subscription 2017/18	£518.44	LGA 1972 s111
Signscape	Replacement noticeboard for Masons Drive	£1122.00	LGA 1972 s111
Claydon and Barham Village Hall	Room hire (on behalf of the SnOasis Parish Alliance)	£48.00	LGA 1972 s111

Councillors unanimously approved these payments.

g. To approve the Clerk as Responsible Financial officer for 2017/18.

Councillors unanimously approved that the Clerk should continue as Responsible Financial Officer.

15. Reports

a. To appoint members to the following outside bodies.

Councillors agreed the following:

SALC - Cllr. Jones

Village Hall Management Committee – Cllr. Peters

Viridor Liaison Committee – Cllr. Plume

Churchyard and Cemetery – Cllr. Peters.

Allotments – Cllr. Jones

Parish Liaison – Cllr. Bowman

Suez Liaison Group – Cllr. Bowman

SnOasis Parish Alliance - Cllr. Plume

b. To receive reports from Councillors assigned to the following:

SALC – none.

Village Hall Management Committee Cllr. Peters felt that there was nothing to add to the report given by the Chairman of the VHMC to the Annual Meeting of the Parish.

Viridor Liaison Committee – there has not been a meeting recently, so no report.

Churchyard and Cemetery – nothing extra to report.

Allotments – nothing extra to report

Parish Liaison - there has not been a meeting recently, so no report

Suez Liaison Group - there has not been a meeting recently, so no report

SnOasis Parish Alliance - the April meeting was cancelled as there had been no further information received from the developer, so no report from that. The SPA has sent out its Statement to a wide range of organisations and government bodies, but has had a disappointing response.

16. Correspondence

To note the following items of correspondence and form a response where appropriate:

None

17. To agree the dates of Parish Council Meetings for the period June 2017 to May 2018, up to and including the 2018 Annual Meeting of the Council.

Councillors agreed to continue with Meetings being held on the second Wednesday of each month, apart from August and December where there will be no Meeting.

Wednesday 14th June 2017

Wednesday 12th July 2017

Wednesday 13th September 2017

Wednesday 11th October 2017

Wednesday 8th November 2017

Wednesday 10th January 2018

Wednesday 14th February 2018

Wednesday 14th March 2018

Wednesday 11th April 2018

Wednesday 9th May 2018 – Annual Meeting of the Council

The Meeting was closed at 8.57 pm.