

GREAT BLAKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 14th June 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.

Three members of the public.

The Chairman opened the Meeting at 7.00pm.

1. Apologies for Absence.

None

2. Councillors declaration of interest appropriate to any item on the Agenda.

a. 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

3. Public Forum

a. To receive the report from County and District Councillor Field.

A planning application has been received for 300 houses in Barham and there will be public meeting about this at the end of June.

The pedestrian crossing on Stowmarket Road – as far as Cllr. Field is aware, it is still going ahead, but there is no definite date.

Councillors raised concerns about the quality of the recent resurfacing work along the Stowmarket road. It was felt that the work was very poor with lots of chippings and not much bitumen and that this was not acceptable for a 'B' road. Cllr. Field replied that the process used was a valid one, representing good value for money and considerably extending the life of the road surface.

Drainage and flooding on local roads – the Chairman said that Highways should be doing pumping, rather than considering it. The B1113 flooding never happened before the road resurfacing and other work and the flooding on this road is now causing problems on Gipping Road and Plummers Dell because the floodwater can only drain in that direction. Cllr. Field said that he would continue to put pressure on Highways to put some positive measures in place.

SnOasis Reserved Matters – the Chairman said that the delinking of the application for the Great Blakenham railway station from SnOasis Reserved Matters was very disappointing, because, once again an asset that would have produced great benefits for the community had been promised in a planning application, but never delivered. Another example was the school that had been included in the application for the Blakenham Fields development, but the area reserved for it is now being used for houses. He felt that the village never benefits from any of the developments - housing and industrial - that are taking place. Also, MSDC must start considering developments in the area as a whole, rather than on a one by one basis, and assess the cumulative pressure on local infrastructure, including roads, schools etc. Cllr. Field confirmed that there was no rule that said Planning could not look at the wider picture and confirmed that there were similar concerns in Claydon&Whitton and Barham.

The Chairman stated that he had found out that the empty shop unit and flats are now for sale and the sale details say that they can be split. They will not be finished before the sale. This means that the village still has no shop, no school, no surgery and no road improvements, in spite of a number of new developments (both already built and under consideration) and a rapidly increasing population.

SnOasis - Councillors expressed their concerns to Cllr. Field that the Reserved Matters application was allowed to proceed in spite of the developer missing several deadlines.

b. To receive the report from District Councillor Welsby.

Not present

c. Questions from members of the public.

A member of the public stated her objection to the possible siting of a dog waste bin on the Mill Lane end of the River Gipping footpath, especially as there was already a dog waste bin further up Mill Lane. The Chairman thanked her and said that the Council was looking at options for another dog waste bin, as there have been complaints about problems with dog waste all along that stretch of the river. However, it was agreed that there was a major issue with trying to get all dog walkers to use the bins that have been provided.

There were questions about SnOasis and whether it would ever go ahead, the Chairman stated that the planning permission was still valid and, if Reserved Matters were approved, the permission would become indefinite. The developer would have the option at any stage to apply for planning permission for an alternative use for the site.

A parishioner asked about the possibility of a Village/Neighbourhood plan, as this would give the Parish Council and the community a stronger voice when dealing with planning applications and potential development in the village. The Chairman said that the Council could consider this, but, as developing such a Plan takes a great deal of work and resources, it would need to assess the costs and workload. The Clerk confirmed that it is possible to involve other people in the process and also to pay for assistance from, for example, a consultant.

Action: Clerk to research costs, timescales, whether any local Councils have or are working on a Plan, how to buy input.

The Public Forum was closed at 7.55 pm.

4. To approve the Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Council held on 10th May 2017

The Minutes of the 10th May 2017 Annual Meeting of the Council were approved and signed by the Chairman as a true and correct record of the Meeting.

5. To note the Clerk's update from previous Meetings.

The Clerk reported that she had not written again regarding the offer to buy the allotments, as she had managed to find a contact number for Stearn Farms and the Chairman had rung them. This would be considered later in the Agenda.

The sign asking people not to use the field next to the allotments had disappeared shortly after it had been put up, so would need to be replaced.

Parking on Chequers Rise to be considered later in the Agenda.

No action had been taken on the quotes for ground penetrating radar for the Cemetery, as it would be useful to have this done on the new area of land as well if the attempt to purchase it is successful, especially as there is a large area of concrete/brickwork in the ground close to the rear hedge which may be the footings of a previous building or wall.

6. Planning

a. To consider the following planning applications:

1755/17	Location: Land at Blackacre Hill, Bramford Road, Great Blakenham	Proposal: Application for variation of condition 20 following grant of planning permission 2351/16: "Application for outline planning permission (including access, all other matters reserved) for development of business and logistics park to provide commercial floorspace principally within Use Classes B1 and B8, to include access onto the B1113 Bramford Road and a secondary
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		means of access via Addison Way, together with the provision of estate roads and ancillary parking, servicing and landscaping to enable revised details for proposed accesses
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Councillors agreed that they had no objection to this proposal.

4494/16	Location: Land at Field Quarry (Known as Masons Quarry), Bramford Road, Great Blakenham, IP6	Proposal: Application for approval of Reserved Matters (phases 1 - 8), pursuant to Outline Permission ref. 1969/10 (for the development known as 'SnOasis').
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The Chairman explained that the SnOasis Parish Alliance (SPA) had agreed to prepare a joint response to SnOasis Reserved Matters. This would be endorsed by all the member parishes and also form the response of each individual Parish He asked Councillors to send in any comments on the application, especially on traffic and wildlife (the areas for which Great Blakenham was responsible) by Friday. The response would be worded in terms of questions and action that the SPA felt required comment by the developer and MSDC.

b. To note any planning determinations.

Councillors noted the following planning determinations.

1279/17	54 Chapel Lane, Great Blakenham IP6 0JZ	Proposal: Erection of a single storey rear extension and extended drop kerb access	Granted
1201/17	11 Keytes Way, Great Blakenham IP6 0NE	Proposal: Erection of a first floor and rear extension.	Granted
2022/16	Land on the west side of Stowmarket Road, Great Blakenham	Proposal: Application (with all matters reserved except access) for up to no 130 dwellings and includes, affordable housing, car parking, open space provision with associated infrastructure	Granted

c. Any other planning matters for information only.

None.

7. Governance

a. To consider the second draft of the Councillor Recruitment leaflet.

Councillors agreed to proceed with the second draft of the leaflet.

ACTION: Clerk to obtain quotes for printing 1000 copies.

b. To consider the Council's Social Media Policy.

Councillors discussed this and agreed that it was important for there to be a policy in place.

Cllr. Peters proposed that the Council accept the Draft Policy. This was seconded by Cllr.

Bowman and agreed unanimously.

c. To note the Clerk's extra hours.

None

d. To note the Clerk's mileage.

Councillors noted that this was not available this month.

8. Allotments

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

The Chairman reported that the Clerk had found a contact number for Stearn Farms and he had spoken to them. They will not discuss the future of the allotment land until Reserved Matters for the housing development on the adjoining land have been approved.

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

The Clerk said that there had been no new allotment holders starting this month and that there had only been one query. Cllr. Jones said that it appeared that not all the allotments that have been let are being worked. Councillors agreed that the present situation meant that it would not be possible to address this.

9. Village Maintenance

a. To receive a progress report about parking on Chequers Rise.

Cllr. Jones reported that Suffolk Police have done one check on Chequers Rise and another one is planned. He will chase them up and also find out the times that these checks are carried out, as this will have a bearing on the result.

ACTION: Cllr. Jones.

The Chairman reported that the Clerk had enquired about the possibility of having double yellow lines put in at the bottom of Chequers Rise. Suffolk County Council have no budget for this and the costs would have to be met by the Parish Council or from the County Councillor's Locality Budget. The very approximate cost for this provided by Suffolk County Council was in the region of £8000, provided there were no objections or other issues. Councillors agreed this was not affordable and would not present good value for money as a use of Council funds.

10. Churchyard and Cemetery.

a. To receive a progress report on the purchase of land for the extension of the Cemetery. The Chairman said that there had been no developments on this.

b. To consider the tenders for the maintenance contract for the Churchyard and Cemetery. The Clerk gave Councillors details of the two tenders received for the contract. After some discussion, the Chairman put it to the vote. There were two votes for Shades and one abstention.

ACTION: Clerk to contact Shades to confirm award of the contract and to contact Impact Landscaping to thank them for their work during their contract period.

11. 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.

Cllr. Jones – Councillor Course - £100+ VAT.

Clerk – Social Media training – cost to be determined.

Both these requests were approved by Councillors. Cllr. Jones to inform the Clerk of the date he would like to be booked in for.

12. Finance

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

None.

b. To consider approving and making the following payments:

Impact Landscaping	Churchyard and cemetery maintenance for May 2017	£546.00	LGA 1972 s214(6) LGA 1972, s.215
Great Blakenham Parish Room	Room hire (May 2017)	£20.00	LGA 1972 s111
Janet Gobey	Clerk's salary for May 2017	£390.80	LGA 1972 s111
M Sillett	Monthly street cleaning	£262.50	LGA 1972 s111

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Glasdons	Two new dog waste bins	£247.10	LGA 1972 s111
Janet Gobey	Clerk's expenses – printer paper, SPA mileage	£18.90	LGA 1972 s111
Claydon and Barham Village Hall	Room hire (on behalf of the SnOasis Parish Alliance)	£16.00	LGA 1972 s111

Councillors approved these payments.

c. To note the Council's Financial Report for May 2017

BANK BALANCES 30/5/2017

BUSINESS PREMIUM ACCOUNT - £15,721.86

COMMUNITY ACCOUNT - £54,153.19

TOTAL - £69,875.05

MONTHLY – MAY 2017

EXPENDITURE 29/4/17 to 30/5/17

£2831.52 cleared cheques (plus uncleared cheques totalling £1688.44)
= £4519.96

INCOME 29/4/17 TO 30/5/17

£0.00

FINANCIAL YEAR TO DATE

EXPENDITURE 1/4/17 to 30/5/17

£4590.81 cleared cheques (plus uncleared cheques totalling £1688.44)
= £6279.25

INCOME TO 1/4/2017 to 30/5/2017

£24,077.56

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

Cllr. Jones checked the bank balance figures against the paper copies and signed the Financial Report to confirm that they agreed.

13. Reports

To receive reports from Councillors assigned to the following:

- a. SALC - None
 - b. Village Hall Management Committee - there are problems with the sound system and there is no amplifier for the speakers. Concerns about the cleaning of the floor and kitchen were raised.
 - c. Viridor Liaison Committee - no meeting.
 - d. Churchyard and Cemetery – already discussed. It was agreed that a letter should be sent to one of the residents of Chalk Hill Drive thanking him for his help with the cemetery bin.
- ACTION: Clerk
- e. Allotments – already discussed.
 - f. Parish Liaison – already discussed.
 - g. Suez Liaison Group - the visit to the incinerator will take place on 20th July at 6.00 pm. Nine places have already been filled. Any further bookings to Cllr. Bowman
 - h. SnOasis Parish Alliance – already discussed.

14. Correspondence

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

15/5/17	LAIS 1399	Neighbourhood Planning Act 2017
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Councillors noted this.

15. To consider altering the date of the February 2018 Meeting.

It was agreed to change the date of the February 2017 Meeting to Wednesday 21st February.

ACTION: Clerk to amend dates on noticeboards and website.

16. Date of next Meeting and any Agenda items for inclusion.

The next Meeting will be held on 12th July 2017 at 7.00 pm.

There were no items put forward for the Agenda.