

GREAT BLAKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL  
Minutes of Parish Council Meeting Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> March 2017 at 7.00pm in the Parish  
Room, Stowmarket Road, Great Blakenham.

PRESENT: Councillors Steve Plume (Chairman), Karen Peters (Deputy Chairman), Joel Waller, Widge Bowman, David Jones.

Clerk to the Council – Janet Gobey.

County and District Councillor John Field. District Councillor Kevin Welsby.

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. Cllr. Plume declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in Item 7a and said that he would withdraw from the meeting when this was discussed.

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.

Highways are considering plans to relieve traffic problems on the roads in Ipswich, as well as the proposed Northern Bypass.

Cllr. Field said that he had undertaken to see if it was possible to improve the road surface up to Blueleighs Park, but had not been able to make any progress on this. A member of the public present said that he was a regular user of the road and would be happy to help with any work required.

Flooding on the B113 was discussed and it was felt that it may be being caused by recent resurfacing works. It is also possible that the clearance work for the Sterling Suffolk greenhouse project may have also contributed to the flooding near the Suez plant. There have also been issues with flooding on Bramford Road at Addison Way. Cllr. Field said that there were drainage measures included in the original planning permission, but these had never been put in place. He will raise this again with County. Cllr. Plume offered to forward a video of the flooding to Cllr. Field to pass on to Highways.

**ACTION: Cllr. Plume**

b. To receive the report from District Councillor Welsby.

A boundary review is underway, but is unlikely to affect Great Blakenham.

Rents for Social Housing are being reduced by the government by 1%.

There have been archaeological investigations on the land next to the allotments and nothing significant was found. The decision on the application for planning permission is expected soon. The allotments are still shown on the plan as allotment land and the access road is still in place.

c. Questions from members of the public.

A member of the public raised the matter of mud on the roads in the village and why MSDC were not fulfilling their duty to sweep the roads at least four times a year. The Chairman asked Cllr. Field to obtain the dates that sweeping has been carried/is scheduled for.

A member of the public said that the mud should be prevented from getting on the roads in the first place. The Chairman said that the Council had contacted JT Few and Viridor. Viridor area allowing another company on their site to use Viridor's wheel washer and will also be increasing the sweeping of their access road. Cllr. Field said that the County Waste team are responsible for ensuring waste firms are taking adequate measures to keep roads clean.

The Chairman urged everybody to keep reporting road problems to Highways through the reporting tool on Suffolk County Council's website. He also informed the Meeting that a

number of reports had been made using email addresses connected with the Parish Council. This unauthorised use had been reported and was being investigated by Highways and County's IT team. This is a waste of public money and he asked everybody who uses the reporting tool to use their own email address, rather than trigger more unnecessary investigations.

The Public Forum was closed at 7.40 pm.

#### 4. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting held on 8<sup>th</sup> February

The Minutes of the 8th February 2017 Meeting 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.

Orbit Housing are arranging for the installation of the two new dog waste bins on Masons Drive.

Other outstanding matters were to be considered under items on the Agenda.

#### 6. Planning

##### a. To consider the following planning applications:

0749/17	Herb Cottage, Great Blakenham, Ipswich, Suffolk, IP6 0NJ	Proposal: Renovation of brick barn including replacing roof structure. Rebuilding of old brick walls. Lean to removed and new lighter weight timber structure erected to replace it.
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Councillors agreed that they had no objection to this application.

##### b. To note any planning determinations.

0164/17	48 Chapel Lane, Great Blakenham IP6 0JZ Proposal: Erection of 1.5 storey rear extension	Approved
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Councillors noted the above.

##### c. Any other planning matters for information only.

None.

#### 7. Governance

##### a. To consider the payment of an annual allowance for the Chairman.

The Chairman left the room. Cllr. Peters, Deputy Chairman, chaired the Meeting. The Clerk gave Councillors information on allowances paid to other local Parish Council Chairs and, after some discussion, Cllr. Peters proposed that the allowance be set at £200 per annum, payable in arrears. This was seconded by Cllr. Bowman and agreed unanimously. The Chairman returned to the room and Cllr. Peters informed him of the Council's decision and also reminded him that the allowance was subject to tax and that he was responsible for declaring the payment to HMRC.

##### b. To approve the Asset Register

The Clerk explained that the Council must have an Asset Register. The last one was done in 2014 and was not comprehensive then. She felt that the list of assets was now up to date, but was unable to find invoices for some purchases or, where there were invoices, to link them up to actual purchases in a number of areas e.g. rubbish bins. Cllr. Bowman proposed acceptance of the Asset Register. This was seconded by Cllr. Bowman and Councillors agreed to approve the Asset Register, but noted that, owing to the complexity of sorting out purchase prices, these may need revision and reapproval.

Cllr. Bowman noted that the grit bin at the top of Chequers Rise had been moved into his garden. He is happy for it to remain there. Two new grit bins are being purchased for Chequers Rise. It was agreed that residents of Chequers Rise would be asked to suggest where they should be situated.

**ACTION: Clerk to put in InTouch**

c. To approve the Risk Assessments

Cllr. Peters proposed that the Draft Financial Risk Assessment be approved. This was seconded by Cllr. Bowman and approved unanimously.

The Draft Allotments Risk Assessment was discussed. It was agreed that the section on the public footpath should be rated as Low Risk. Cllr. Peters proposed that the Risk Assessment should be approved. This was seconded by Cllr. Jones and approved unanimously.

The Draft Cemetery Risk Assessment was discussed. Cllr. Peters felt that the section about banning the use of glass and other breakable materials in the Cemetery was too restrictive, especially as this is such a sensitive area. The Chairman stated that all the Cemeteries he had looked at in the course of researching the Cemetery booklet banned the use of breakable materials such as glass.

A member of the public wished to make a comment, so the Chairman proposed that the Meeting be closed to allow this. Councillors agreed and the Meeting was closed at 8.17pm. There was a discussion about how any such ban could be enforced and whether it should apply to old internments as well as new ones. Older internments presented another problem as they may well not be maintained by anybody and damaged articles are not removed. It was agreed that a sign could be put up, as well as it being included in the proposed Cemetery booklet. The Meeting was reopened at 8.17pm.

The Chairman asked that Councillors vote on whether to approve the Draft Cemetery Risk Assessment. There were three votes to approve it and one abstention.

d. To approve the Council's Standing Orders.

The Clerk explained that there were the Model Standing Orders. The time of meetings has been updated, the option to extend the length of the Meeting has been added and the arrangements for line management of the Clerk have been included.

Councillors agreed unanimously to adopt the Standing Orders.

e. To approve the Financial Regulations

Councillors agreed unanimously to adopt the Financial Regulations.

f. To note the Clerk's extra hours.

Councillors noted the payment of 10 extra hours for the Clerk for the period 1<sup>st</sup> February 2017 to 28<sup>th</sup> February 2017.

g. To resolve that the Chairman and Deputy Chairman are responsible for the management of the Clerk and will report back to the Council as required.

Councillors approved this unanimously.

## 8. Churchyard and Cemetery.

a. To approve the Cemetery Management Policies – internment form, cemetery regulations, cemetery fees and any supporting documentation.

The Chairman proposed that these be taken forward to the next Meeting, as the Agenda for this meeting was unusually long due to the number of documents that needed to be considered and approved. Councillors agreed this unanimously.

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

Cllr. Peters has tried to make contact with the landowners, but has not heard anything back from them.

c. To approve an extension of the contract with Impact Landscaping until the tender exercise is complete.

Councillors agreed unanimously that the Impact Landscaping contract should be extended by three months from 1<sup>st</sup> April 2017 to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2017 while the tender exercise is completed. It was also agreed that the terms and conditions in the existing contract would apply to the three month extension.

## 9. Allotments

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

The Clerk said that she had written to the landowners, but had received no response as yet.

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

The Clerk said that nine allotments were occupied and that she had received some queries from possible new plot holders. She would arrange for an article to go in the InTouch edition covering Claydon, as plot holders who live there would not have seen any of the articles in the Great Blakenham edition.

c. To consider maintenance for the unoccupied plots.

The Clerk said that several of the vacant plots were very overgrown now. Cllr. Jones confirmed that a number of the ex plot holders had left tools and equipment on their plots and that clearing some of the plots would be a big task. Councillors discussed whether to investigate the costs of getting the vacant plots cleared, but felt that it was customary for new plot holders to expect to have to clear their plots and that some would actually prefer to do it themselves. Councillors agreed that paying for clearance might be necessary if it proved to be a barrier to plots being let, but would not proceed with this at present.

#### 10. Village Maintenance

a. To consider the quotes for the replacement noticeboard on Blakenham Fields.

The Clerk said that she had obtained three quotes for the new noticeboard. The noticeboard appeared to be identical in each quote.

Quote 1 – The Noticeboard Company - £1539.00 (exc. VAT). Quote includes installation.

Quote 2 – Noticeboards Online - £1462.00 (exc. VAT). Quote includes installation.

Quote 3 – Signscape – £950.00 (exc. VAT). Quote does not include installation. The company will install the board for approx. £600.00. The Council agreed to accept the quote without installation from Signscape and arrange for installation locally.

#### **ACTION: Clerk**

b. To consider reseeding and improving the grass verges on Stowmarket Road at the Needham Market end of the village.

The Clerk confirmed that the Council has a Power to action this, but would need to receive approval from Highways. The Chairman felt that it would approve the appearance of the verges and benefit wildlife.

#### **ACTION: Clerk to contact Highways**

c. To consider the purchase of two extra grit bins for Chequers Rise.

The Clerk said that MSDC had recommended what kind of bins would be most suitable and that the grant from Cllr. Field's Locality Budget would almost cover the costs of these.

Councillors agreed unanimously to purchase the two grit bins.

#### **ACTION: Clerk to order the bins.**

#### 11. Training and Development for Councillors and Clerk

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

Councillors noted the following - Cllr. Plume and the Clerk to attend the Cemetery Course at SALC: 17<sup>th</sup> May 2017. Cost £80 + VAT per person.

b. To consider any other training requests.

Clerk's Networking Event at SALC: 23<sup>rd</sup> March 2017. Cost £16 +VAT. Councillors unanimously approved this.

#### 12. Battle's Over - 1000 WWI Beacons of Light

After some discussion, Councillors agreed to review the possibility of participating in this event when more information was available. It was also agreed that there was no obvious location for a bonfire and that it would be too expensive to install a beacon.

#### 13. 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 February 2017	£273.00	LGA 1972 s214(6) LGA 1972, s.215
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Great Blakenham Parish Room	Room hire (February 2017)	£20.00	LGA 1972 s111
Suffolk County Council	Street Lighting Energy and Maintenance	£1091.03	Parish Councils Act 1957, s.3  Highways Act 1980, s.301
Janet Gobey – Clerk's expenses	Stamps. Laptop case. Mileage up to end January 2017(already approved)	£72.23	LGA 1972 s111
Janet Gobey	Clerk's salary for February 2017(including backdated Working from Home allowance, extra hours for November and December, SnOasis Parish Alliance hours).	£655.98	LGA 1972 s111
M Sillett	Street cleaning	£210.00	LGA 1972 s111
G Sillett	Street cleaning	£210.00	LGA 1972 s111
Office of the Information Commissioner	Annual registration with the OIC	£35.00	LGA 1972 s111

c. To note the Council's March 2017 Financial Report.

**BANK BALANCES 28/2/2017**

BUSINESS PREMIUM ACCOUNT - £15,721.86

COMMUNITY ACCOUNT - £38,720.68

**TOTAL - £54,422.54**

**EXPENDITURE 1/2/17 TO 28/2/17**

£750.10 cleared cheques (plus uncleared cheques totalling £438) = **£1188.10**

**INCOME 1/2/17 TO 28/2/17**

None

**EXPENDITURE TO 28/2/17**

£20,333.40

**INCOME TO 28/2/2017**

£34,728.42

**PROJECTED EXPENDITURE AT 31/3/17**

£22,900.64.

**PROJECTED BALANCE AT 31/3/17**

£51,855.3

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

Councillors noted the Financial Report and Cllr. Jones verified the above bank balance figures against the bank statements.

### 14. Reports

To receive reports from Councillors assigned to the following:

a. SALC - none

b. Village Hall Management Committee – Cllr. Peters was unable to attend the last meeting.

c. Viridor Liaison Committee – Cllr. Plume had already given feedback during the Public Forum.

d. Churchyard and Cemetery – already covered.

e. Allotments – already covered

f. Parish Liaison – nothing to report.

g. Suez Liaison Group – Cllr. Bowman – a routine shutdown is expected shortly. Cllr Bowman will contact Suez to book a tour on a Thursday evening.

**ACTION:** Cllr. Bowman

h. SnOasis Parish Alliance – Cllr. Plume said that the SPA was intending to send out a letter outlining their position on SnOasis Reserved Matters and their views on the way the process was being managed. This would be sent out to a wide range of organisations once agreement had been reached on the content.

### 15. Correspondence

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

Various	JT Few	Emails regarding mud on Stowmarket Road.
28 <sup>th</sup> February 2017	Viridor	Email regarding mud on the road.

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

Next Meeting - 12<sup>th</sup> April 2017 at 7.00pm in the Parish Room. No items were put forward to be included in the Agenda.