

## GREAT BLAKENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Gt Blakenham Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 26<sup>th</sup> October 2022 in the Parish Room, Stowmarket Road, Great Blakenham, at 7.30pm.

Present: Cllr Steve Plume (Chairman), Cllr Eoin McNamee, Cllr Deborah Kemp, District Cllr. John Field, Suffolk County Cllr Chris Chambers, Melanie Thurston (Locum Clerk), and 5 members of the public.

The Chairman welcomed all and opened the meeting at 7.30pm.

### MINUTES

#### 1. To receive and approve any apologies for absence.

Cllr Will Durrant due to family commitments. The Parish Council approved his absence.

#### 2. Declaration of any pecuniary and non-pecuniary interests.

- a. Councillors declaration of interest appropriate to any item on the agenda. The Chairman item 13a.
- b. To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interest (if any). None.
- c. To grant any requests for dispensations as appropriate. None.
- d. Co-option of parish councillor. No applications received.

#### 3. Public Forum

b. To receive the report from the District Councillor John Field. Reported that government has provided a Household Support Fund of £50,000 to help and protect the most vulnerable families from hardship. It has helped 134 households who had rent arrears. The council rent cap is being considered by government to avoid an 11% increase. Hopeful that more car charging points will be available in Suffolk, currently only 4 in mid Suffolk. The councils 5 year housing land supply position is in draft form and under consultation. There is currently a shortage in the supply of housing. The new local plan is underway although it has been delayed, the latest proposal is to move grade 3b farmland into the "best and most versatile" category, making the solar farms in our area much less likely to proceed.  
The Chairman would like to see an extension on the life of landfill sites!

c. To receive questions from members of the public.

Member of the public who had recently visited the Chequers/Indian restaurant had experienced great food and nice people. He would like to bring to the attention of the Parish Council that no change of use has been applied for, however planning enforcement has recently visited the Chequers and advised that they must apply for change of use. The pub is now a restaurant and with a change of use, the concern was other planning applications could be applied for. Could the Parish Council apply for an ACV or consider buying the Chequers and running it?

The Chairman doubts that there would be enough support in the village to run it, but would expect a working group of parishioners to take forward, the Parish Council has no concerns as the site is run under leasehold. In the meantime wait to see what happens when the district council grants a change of use.

Member of the public informed that she has taken over as the new parish recorder. Would also like to bring to the attention of the editor of the In Touch magazine that it is not delivered to Gipping Mill and Chapel Lane, Cllr John Field will report this to the editor.

Member of the public expressed concern at the speed which traffic travels along the Stowmarket Rd. The Chairman informed that sadly no volunteers have come forward to set up a Community Speed Watch. Only 3 people are needed to carry out the initial training! He is well aware that vehicles travel through the village at 100mph and more commonly in excess of 70mph (readings from the last SID device). The Parish Council is awaiting approval of locations for further posts to be installed by SCC for further SID devices.

Chairmans initials.....

Cllr Kemp passed on thanks on behalf of residents for the tree cutting on Hackneys Corner, it has made a great improvement.

4. To approve the Minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on the 1<sup>st</sup> September 2022.  
Approved and signed by the Chairman.

5. To note the Clerk's update from previous Meetings.  
The Chairman has nothing to report.

6. Planning

a. To consider the following planning applications.

|             |  |                  |
|-------------|--|------------------|
| DC/22/01161 | Erection of 3No detached bungalows with associated parking facilities served by extension of Old Bell Lane. Land R/O 253 Stowmarket Road , (Off Old Bell Lane), Great Blakenham, Ipswich Suffolk IP6 0LY | Full application |
|-------------|--|------------------|

b. To note any planning determinations

|             |  |                  |
|-------------|--|------------------|
| DC/22/01161 | Erection of 3No detached bungalows with associated parking facilities served by extension of Old Bell Lane. Land R/O 253 Stowmarket Road , (Off Old Bell Lane), Great Blakenham, Ipswich Suffolk IP6 0LY | Full application |
|-------------|--|------------------|

c. Any other planning matters to note.

|             |  |  |
|-------------|--|--|
| DC/20/00967 | Change of use to land in Plummers Dell | Parishioner has requested an update from MSDC Planning as this application is 2 years old and has yet to be determined |
|-------------|--|--|

7. Growth, Highways and Infrastructure

a. To note any update on the Council's formal request to Suffolk County Council to change the lights on the Stowmarket Road zebra crossing to halo lights traffic.

The Chairman reported that the Highways representative is considering options.

b. Three new gateway signs have been ordered. Port One has agreed to install the gateway signs when they first complete the landscaping by the Bramford Road entrance.


The Chairman will ensure that the signs are located at the correct location's.

c. To note any update on the notification to the Council of proposed roadworks by SCC Highways. This is still being looked into.

d. To update the Council on the teams call with Highways and SCC Chris Chambers.

The Chairman reported that he had raised the issue of flooding on Bramford Rd & Gipping Rd (water runoff from the industrial site on Anson Way), accidents are being caused by this. The runoff also floods into the front gardens and into the properties. There is not adequate drainage to take the water away. Gipping Rd by Sackers remains closed.

Cllr Chambers advised that a follow up teams call will take place in 2 weeks time.

Chairmans initials.....

e. To discuss the use of MW Sweepers.

The Chairman suggests that the current contract should be terminated as MW Sweepers can no longer be

relied upon to carry out the work. A new contractor will be sought.

f. To review and discuss Speed Indication Devices locations.

The Chairman informed that the Parish Council are proposing to purchase and install 3 new Speed Indication Devices. Guided by County Cllr Chris Chamber, Suffolk Highways prefer to see more sites available to allow SID's to be moved in the parish. Key decision factor is to find locations that allow 2m clearance from the highways, this allows for less complicated and better value installations. Therefore proposed locations are 2 on Stowmarket Rd, 2 on Gipping Rd (from Claydon end), 2 on Bramford Rd. The Chairman has registered the locations with Highways and once approved they will install the posts. The Parish Council can then purchase the SID devices.

Suffolk County Cllr Chris Chambers advised that he has nothing to add under item 3a.

#### 8. Governance

a. To consider moving to a software based method of recording finance, VAT, asset register, cemetery management and Allotments ([www.realtas.co.uk](http://www.realtas.co.uk)).

The Chairman advised that the current format which the Clerk uses for the parish council accounts is a challenge and out of date. He would like to suggest that the more efficient Realtas software programme is purchased and used instead. This met with the Parish Councils approval.

b. Update on the search for a new clerk, review hours and pay scale.

The Chairman reported that he along with Cllr Kemp will be interviewing a candidate tomorrow. It is obvious that the 12 hours a week currently contracted for the Gt Blakenham clerk is not enough to get the job done. The Parish Council must be flexible on this and allow more hours. The salary will also need to be more than the national minimum pay. He informed that Claydon & Whitton Parish Council is also looking for a new Clerk, could the role be shared? This is something to look at in the future.

c. Receive update on custodian trustee seat on the VHMC – Cllr McNamee will be drafting a contract.

d. To discuss adoption of the new Local Government Act Councillors Code of Conduct.

The locum clerk has forward a copy of the new code of conduct to all in advance of the meeting.

The parish council approved to adopt the new code. Councillors must update their interests annually on the district council website, and within 28 days of any changes in circumstances.

e. To consider S137 payment to Great Blakenham Chequers youth football teams.

A request has been received for grant funding towards a Veo camera which is a player training and match performance analysis device. The device will benefit all the players by being able to show them real situations of themselves during/training and match days. Cost of the device is £2400.00, the club has been fund raising but have a short fall of £1295.00.

The Parish Council have recently paid for new goal posts for the football club, it was therefore agreed to contribute £500 towards the Veo camera.

f. To consider making an annual donation to the poppy appeal.

It was agreed by all to make a donation of £100.

g. To consider making annual donation to St Mary's Church Christmas tree appeal.

It was agreed by all to make a donation of £100.

#### 9. Allotments.

a. To note the completion of the Woodville Allotment project.

The Chairman confirmed that the new fencing, hardstanding, sheds and car parking is complete at the allotments and that the allotment holders are all very pleased.

b. Update on locality award from District Cllr John Field for water conservation at the allotments.

The Chairman would like the work to go ahead ASAP, due to the build-up of water. Cllr Field hopes that the parish councils application for his Locality Budget will get the go ahead later this week.

c. To note we now have 100% occupancy.

The Chairman confirmed that all of the allotment plots have now been allocated.

Chairmans initials.....*SP*.....

#### 10. Village Maintenance

- a. Tree cutting Hackneys Corner – completed.
- b. Commemorative English Oak Tree - £260 inc delivery and planting (6cm diameter trunk). Botanica to carry this out, delivery 2<sup>nd</sup> week November. All agreed.
- c. Tree bench surround for oak tree - £995 inc. vat plus postage. To mark the Queens life and Platinum Jubilee. All agreed.
- d. Tree canopy survey – sent to all Cllrs and posted on our facebook feed.
- e. To note that Shades Maintenance and Cllr S Plume received training “Community Self-help Signing, Lighting and Guarding” at SW Training arranged by Suffolk Highways.
- f. To review quote for tree management on land raised in the July meeting to the east of Plummers Dell. 8 trees to be shaped, cost £1100.00 plus VAT. All agreed.
- g. To note ongoing engagement with MSDC Bio-diversity officer. The Chairman reported that he is still in contact. MSDC is currently trying to establish who owns the piece of land on Hackneys Corner.
- h. To note application to SCC for a bus shelter on the south side of Bramford Rd by the bus stop.
- i. To consider the costs of clearing the bank (old SSSI) south side of Bramford Rd to return it to its former wildflower and grass habitat. The Chairman informed that the cost of 4 people to clear the area and 4 hours work per session could be expected to be £220.00. All agreed that this should go ahead.

11. Churchyard and Cemetery.

- a. To consider any options for the rebuild and maintenance of the shelter in the Cemetery. Suitable company still not found, ongoing issue.
- b. Update on the management of the churchyard grounds outside the current contracted arrangement. The Chairman informed still awaiting to find out the terms when the churchyard was passed to the Parish Council. Unable to repair the path until terms are confirmed.
- c. FS-Case-457991530 – damage to east hedgerow in the lawn cemetery. Caused by the developer. District Council Enforcement officer has inspected and opinion is at they cannot see anything wrong! The Chairman is extremely disappointed with this response, however the developer has informed that a fence is to be erected.

12. Training and Development for Councillors and Clerk

- a. To note the following training already booked (if any): Update on councillor training courses x 6 September to November 2022 – Cllr. McNamee is currently undertaking. Encourage him to take part in the Chairman’s course.
- b. To consider any other training requests – Training for Cllr Kemp / all. Cllr Kemp is booked onto the councillor training course, programmed to take place early next year.

13. Finance

- a. To consider approving and making the following payments:

|                    |   |          |                                     |
|--------------------|---|----------|-------------------------------------|
| Shades Maintenance | Street cleaning as per tender - Inv 2239                    | £1300.00 | LGA 1972 s214(6)<br>LGA 1972, s.215 |
| Shades Maintenance | Hackneys Corner maintenance charge as per tender - Inv 2237 | £135.00  | LGA 1972 s214(6)<br>LGA 1972, s.215 |
| Shades Maintenance | Grounds Maintenance as per tender – Inv 2238                | £507.50  | LGA 1972 s214(6)<br>LGA 1972, s.215 |
| SALC               | Payroll service – up to 30 <sup>th</sup> Sept – Inv 26390   | £45.00   | LGA 1972 s.111                      |
| SALC               | Training – Chairmanship – Inv 26527                         | £25.00   | LGA 1972 s.111                      |

|                        |   |          |  |
|------------------------|---|----------|--|
| Sackers                | Skip Hire – allotments<br>Invoice OUT- OUT-91378 & 91962                                  | £508.80  | Small Holding and Allotments Act 1908. Subsections 23&25 |
| MSDC                   | Litter and Dog bin emptying – new bin Chapel Lane August 2022 – March 2023 Inv 2000151469 | £34.75   | LGA 1972 s214(6)<br>LGA 1972, s.215                      |
| AW Goddard             | Supply and instal additional 2 sheds and hard standing – Inv 2506                         | £1716.00 | Small Holding and Allotments Act 1908. Subsections 23&25 |
| Pestforce              | Wasp nest removal – allotments  | £80.00   | Small Holding and Allotments Act 1908. Subsections 23&25 |
| Fourteen (Suffolk) Ltd | Tree and hedgerow management – Hackneys Corner & Woodville Allotments Inv - #0GTB010      | £3540.00 | LGA 1972 s214(6)<br>LGA 1972, s.215                      |
| Melanie Thurston       | Fees and mileage for locum clerk – 6hrs @ £15.00 per hour and 44 miles at 45p per mile    | £109.80  | LGA 1972 s.111   |
| Cllr Plume             | Mileage for highway training course 56miles at 45p per mile                               | £25.20   | LGA 1972 s.111   |
| Poppy Appeal           | Annual request for donation   | £100.00  |  |
| St Mary's Church       | Annual request for donation to the Christmas festival                                     | £100.00  |  |

Payment of the above was approved.

b. To note the Council's Financial Reports for September 2022 ??? including any payments made out of meeting and any invoices for Business Direct Debit card payments.

|                    |   |          |  |
|--------------------|---|----------|--|
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All of the above payments were approved.

Bank balances as at 29/09/22 – Business Premium Account £15,807.82.  
Community Current Account £235,762.08.

c. Received a CIL payment for £8351.64 payment ref EBC0048747.  
Quarterly cleansing grant applied for £1235.00.  
Second half of precept payment received £24239.00 ref 0070000148.

#### 14. Reports


To receive reports from Councillors assigned to the following:

- Viridor Liaison Committee - Cllr. Plume. Viridor will not be changing its name.
- Suez Liaison Group - Cllr. Plume. The merger of SUEZ and Veolia is likely to take several months.
- Great Blakenham Village Hall – Email from the charities committee.

Chairman reported that the accounts are in a poor state and have not been submitted to the Charities Committee. Member of the public advised that the accounts are now being updated by an accountant and once this has been completed, will then be sent to the Charities Committee.

Going forward changes are being made and the accounts will be done on time in the future.

The Chairman thanked for the update. However, is disappointed that the Parish Council had paid for a sustainability report for the village hall. As yet none of the recommended improvement works which had been highlighted by a surveyor have been carried out. On this basis the Parish Council is unlikely to help out with future funding.

Chairmans initials.....

#### 15. Correspondence

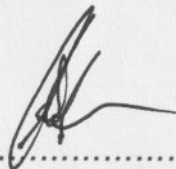
- a. Parishioner would like to raise concern over future development issues that can arise from a change of use losing protection for a pub building/land over future housing developments (eg. carpark). Dealt with earlier in the Public Forum.
- b. Parishioner requesting update on planning application DC/20/00967 which is now 2 years overdue – Plummers Dell, HA Assurance – to note.

16. Future meetings

- a. To note invitation for items to be considered in the next meeting. Any suggestions welcome.
- b. To note the date of the next scheduled Meeting on Tuesday 22<sup>nd</sup> November 2022 and any items for the agenda.

Meeting closed at 9.15pm

Clerk to Great Blakenham Parish Council  
Email: [pc@greatblakenham.suffolk.gov.uk](mailto:pc@greatblakenham.suffolk.gov.uk)  
Phone: 07508830777  
Parish Council website: [www.greatblakenham.suffolk.cloud](http://www.greatblakenham.suffolk.cloud)

Signed by the Chairman.....

Date 22/11/22.....