



GREAT DENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Great Denham Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 4th November 2019 in Great Denham Community Hall, 86-88 Saxon Way, Great Denham, MK40 4GP

Present:

Parish Councillors: Donna Parsons (DP) - Chair; Steve Gallagher (SG); Michael Cuthbertson (MC); Chris Staite (CST)

Borough Councillor: Jim Weir (JW)

Parish Clerk: Anna O'Meara (AOM)

Members of the Public: 2 in attendance

Public Questions

The meeting was adjourned for public questions as follows:

DP advised of 2 questions received via email:

1. Inadequate road markings/driver behaviour

Concern over the junction of Saxon Way and Kingswood Way – drivers frequently do not stop/give way at this junction in spite of the road markings. It was also noted that the hatch markings on that corner (Kingswood Way/Great Portway) had faded and needed repainting as cars are parking there affecting visibility. The resident also felt that the directional arrow markings on the roundabout on Kingswood Way were confusing and had been since they were first implemented as traffic enters the roundabout from both the left- and right-hand lane to take the second exit (straight on).

In discussion Council noted that it may be helpful to install a Give Way/Stop sign on the Saxon/Kingswood Way junction: this has been requested from Highways on previous occasions, and had been rejected, but would be asked for again, particularly given the growth of the development and increased traffic flow. It was also noted that the issue of the directional arrows had also been raised with Highways on numerous occasions by the Clerk and previous Councillors and residents, but again had been rejected, but would be raised again.

Action: Highways will be asked to reconsider the signage on Saxon Way/Kingswood Way; JW is currently in discussion re 20mph signage at the Retail Centre and will include this item in this discussion.

Action: Clerk now has contact for local Highways Officer and will speak to them again on the directional arrows.

2. Parking on Cantley Road, in particular the poor visibility created by inconsiderate parking at the junctions of roads off Cantley Road.

DP advised that the Council had previously discussed implementing no verge/no pavement parking restrictions and double yellow lines on corners on this road, and agreed to proceed once Danegeld Avenue was reopened. Danegeld reopened on 30/10/19, and so this would now be pursued with the Borough Council.

Action: Clerk to request survey and costs for this work from Highways as first step towards implementation.

3. Resident recorded their thanks to the Council for its grant support for the Tea and Talk meetings.

4. Resident reported that the rails across the Golf Club (School end) were damaged and required repair.

Action: Clerk to report for repair.

The meeting was re-opened.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Evans, Slinn and Ruskin.

Resolved: The apologies were accepted.

2. Declarations of Interest

DP declared a non-pecuniary interest as trustees of Great Denham Community Hall (GDCH).

3. Minutes of the last meeting

Resolved: The minutes of the meeting on 7th October 2019 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by DP.

4. Traffic and Parking

a) Parking on Anglia Way/Retail Centre

MC noted that drivers continue to park illegally on double yellow lines and pavements outside the local shops, including delivery lorries and Royal Mail. Clerk reported that there had been a lot of correspondence with Royal Mail on the subject of their parking but they would not consider parking in a loading bay or the car park for mail delivery/collection. A number of suggestions were made in discussion by Council, including bollards on the kerb, railings on the shop side of the road between the crossing points, and a zebra crossing (it was noted that this was discussed at the September meeting and the decisions not to proceed with a feasibility study would be re-visited after 6 months, as it is now clear that Highways have given conflicting advice on this matter). DP has already asked Highways for more info.

JW advised that if loading restrictions were needed these could be included in the Traffic Regulation Order that will be needed to implement the 20mph zone that he is funding from Ward Fund – a request to support this will be coming to Council in due course.

Action: options suggested to be investigated with Highways and BBC Adoptions manager to see what can be done. It was noted that the installation of railings was a preferred option by Council.

The concerns on parking at the Retail Centre had been discussed with the Property Manager in August, as it was noted that this is private land and so the Parish Council have no authority to implement anything here. Clerk reported that after speaking to the Property Manager, it was clear that there was mixed support from the businesses for any parking restrictions; the biggest issue was parking in the loading bay, and it was felt that Sainsburys should take more responsibility in enforcing no parking on the loading bay.

Action: Clerk to write formally to the Property Manager regarding the parking issues, and to request that Sainsburys are asked to increase measures on loading bay parking.

b) Road Safety outside the School

A number of measures are still outstanding to address road safety issues outside Great Denham Primary School:

- CCTV cameras outside school entrance (Bedford Borough-wide initiative promised at time of Local Elections) – latest news is that these will be done by end of the financial year (end March)
- Railings outside Kingswood Way gate – Highways have advised that they have requested budget, but the requirement for emergency vehicle access (now confirmed by Fire Service as 3.7m opening) has resulted in no progress on this as an alternative solution may be required. It was suggested in discussion that it may be necessary to provide a new emergency access gate somewhere else as an alternative so that the railings can be installed.
- It was also noted that the school warning flashing lights that are operative on Greenkeepers Road are also required on Kingswood Way.
- Concern was raised that the decorative walls on Greenkeepers, at end of Golf Course pathway across from the school, are a hazard for safe crossing at this point as they reduce visibility. Whilst they were intended to narrow the road and encourage drivers to control speed, this control is not happening in practice.

Action: Clerk is arranging a meeting with Highways and the School (Chair and Borough Councillor to attend) to progress railings and also raise the other issues identified. A meeting with Highways and Adoptions may be required re the decorative walls.

5. Environment – Update following quarterly meeting with David Wilson Homes

SG reported on the meeting which had taken place on Friday 1st November. Unfortunately, the DWH Contracts Manager was unable to attend, and so there was no detailed update available on the current developments. Notes from the meeting are attached with these minutes, but headlines are:

- DWH clarified that adoption of Greenkeepers Road will be in 2 phases, and this will be the spine road only and not roads off (as previously reported).
- DWH and the PC reviewed the no verge/no pavement parking scheme: DWH reported that the implementation of this had significantly reduced kerb damage and repairs pre-adoption.
- Streetlights – missing or non-working streetlights were discussed; a full list from the PC audit has been sent to DWH. It may be necessary to arrange a meeting with the Borough to ensure that missing streetlights are installed in line with BBC adoption requirements.
- It was noted that signage on King Alfred Way and Anglia Way had now been done, but in the wrong place! The PC will supply precise locations and DWH will get these moved.
- DWH will be asked to show management company on a map of the development so this can be shared with residents.

Next meeting will be in February 2020.

6. Community Events and Engagement

a) Fireworks event

The Council has received very positive feedback from residents via social media; the organisation has gone smoothly and the road closure of Carnoustie Drive was felt to be worthwhile. It was reported that the bucket collection had raised c.£500 for Friends of Great Denham; whilst this was good, some disappointment was felt that this could have been higher given the number of people attending (est. 2,500). A Gofundme page has been set up in response to feedback that people had not seen collection buckets, although there has been little activity on this. A review meeting will be held with the Golf Club on Thursday 7th November – suggestions received from residents include:

- An announcement 5 mins before the fireworks start
- More buckets for donations
- Possible children's activities at the Golf Club

- Investigate options to charge for parking, especially as a large number of attendees came from outside Great Denham
- Greater control of advertising of the event, to focus on Great Denham residents; a large number of people from other villages came to enjoy a free display.

b) Christmas Lights around Retail Centre

DP reported that she had met with BBC Streetlighting and had received a quote for fitting Christmas lights at the Retail centre and also for a Christmas Tree pit outside Toybox Nursery which could then be decorated each year. It was noted that some figures in the quote are still outstanding: £2000 for tree pit, £2000 for Retail Centre lights (but costs of fittings still outstanding). It was noted that it is probably too late for this year, but Council will pursue with a view to including in next year's budget.

c) Aldwyck Housing – update on meeting

Further to last month's report, DP has now received a project planning report, but there are still some items outstanding, so this will be brought to a future meeting.

Action: future agenda item.

7. Website

MC has circulated a report on options available, as our current website provider (Cambridge Open Systems) will be ceasing support at end of March 2020. The Beds branch of SLCC has been investigating options, which MC has reviewed, and is now recommending. It is also timely for us to move to a .gov.uk domain name and emails, which can be incorporated.

2 options for website address were discussed: greatdenhamparishcouncil.gov.uk or greatdenham-pc.gov.uk.

Eyelid Productions will transfer all data back to 2017; we will need to manage transfer of everything prior to 2017; CST offered his help on this.

Resolved: website address: www.greatdenhamparishcouncil.gov.uk was agreed. This domain name will be procured.

Resolved: Budget of £1000 for Year 1 was approved. Future requirements will be built into next years budget (and future years).

Resolved: the Cloudnext premium package will be procured.

Resolved: an order with Eyelid Productions will be made for transfer of existing website.

MC and Clerk to progress.

8. Training

BATPC have circulated information on a Transparency and Audit workshop in February 2020. MC would like to attend.

Resolved: Training approved: one place to be booked by Clerk for MC.

9. Planning

Application 19/02239/ADV Installation of non-illuminated signage, Ripley View Marketing Suite

Council discussed this. It was noted that installation of signage had already begun, although response date for this application was 14th November 2019. It was also noted that the plans showed railings which blocked the only pedestrian path from Danegeld; this had already been raised at DWH meeting, but would be noted in comments sent in response to application as there was no other footpath and pedestrians were forced to walk in the road.

Resolved: response agreed.

10. Borough Councillors Report

JW shared the highlights of his report; a copy if attached to these minutes. Headlines are:

- JW is in discussion with Highways re implementing 20mph signage around the Retail Centre. Any TRO required will be brought to the PC for agreement.
- JW advised that he continues to lobby planning and the mayor re the reported plan for streetlight replacements; he has been informed that costs are being reconsidered.
- The proposed merger of Bedford and Luton and Dunstable hospitals will be going ahead by April 2020.
- The contract for Putnoe Walk-In centre has been renewed until September 2021 but Beds Clinical Commissioning Group
- A week of action focused on rural crime took place w/c 7th October.
- Beds Police have done a detailed assessment of drug crime in Bedfordshire and its impact.
- Bedford Borough Council are considering a motion to invest £10M to purchase/supply the Council's own housing supply to combat homelessness.
- JW reported that he is receiving numerous complaints about the Village Medical Centre and is pursuing these with the Clinical Commissioning Group.
- Open Space Management ("Roof Tax") – JW reported that he continues to push for the cost details and data on this, his goal is to confirm all details in order to be able to assess whether the £120 charge is Value for Money.

11. Budget

a) Budget preparation for 2020/21

Council discussed a number of suggestions to consider when putting together budget for 2020/21.

Action: Clerk to include in first draft of budget for review at December meeting. Note, some suggestions may be covered by existing earmarked reserves.

b) CIL monies

CIL money had now been received in Council accounts and must be spent within 5 years; a report of annual spend to be sent to the Borough every year. A number of suggestions had already been made and are attached to these minutes. Consultation of views of residents will be sought over the next few months.

Action: Clerk to investigate costs of bike trail with Wootton Clerk.

12. Finance and Clerk's Report

a) Finance Report & payments – signature of cheques/initial invoices/approve & initial Bacs payments

The Finance Report had been circulated and a copy is attached to these minutes. All receipts were available for inspection

Resolved: All payments were approved and all Bacs payments approved by two councillors were initialled together with the invoices. Cheque 100425 was signed by DP and SG.

b) Quarterly Financial Reconciliation

SG confirmed that this had been completed to end September 2019 (delayed due to Clerk's leave).

Resolved: Quarterly Financial reconciliation completed satisfactorily with no issues.

c) Renewal of SLCC membership for Clerk

Resolved: Agreed to pay for membership renewal £156

d) Subscription to Parish On-Line mapping software

MC advised that he is currently trialling this software on a 30-day trial. He believes it will be useful to record Council assets and other items such as streetlights. He proposed purchase of annual licence at cost of £75 plus VAT if trial proves successful.

Resolved: to proceed with purchase on annual licence if MC is satisfied with trial.

e) Review of other actions

Action list has been circulated and updates given.

13. Correspondence

All correspondence was available at the meeting and a list is attached to these minutes.

Resolved: No correspondence required discussion.

14. Any Other Business

For Exchange of information only – no decisions may be made here.

SG informed the meeting that he is resigning as a Parish Councillor from 5th November 2019. All thanked him for his contribution during his time as a Councillor and his work on behalf of the community.

15. Date of Next Meeting

2nd December 2019