



## GREAT DENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Great Denham Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2020. The meeting was held remotely.

### **Present:**

**Parish Councillors:** Donna Parsons (DP) - Chair; Chris Staite (CST); Louise Evans (LE); Helen Allen (HA); Vince Arthur (VA); Jo Ruskin (JR)

**Borough Councillor:** Jim Weir (JW) until 8.30pm

**Parish Clerk:** Anna O'Meara (AOM)

**Members of the Public:** 7 members of public in attendance

### **Public Questions**

The meeting was adjourned for public questions as follows:

1. Resident asked to record thanks to the Parish Council for hosting the Pumpkin Parade and providing free pumpkins for carving. The event was welcomed by residents.

The meeting was re-opened.

### **1. Apologies**

DP proposed that Council agreed to the absence of Chris Slinn from meetings until January 2021 due to his significant commitments with a work project which is due to end in December 2020.

**Resolved: The reason for absence until January 2021 was accepted.**

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

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

### **3. Minutes of the last meeting**

**Resolved: The minutes of the meeting held 5<sup>th</sup> October 2020 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by DP.**

### **4. Update on Great Denham Golf Course**

DP advised that the meeting scheduled with Bidwells and the Parish Councils of Great Denham and Biddenham had been moved from 2<sup>nd</sup> to 9<sup>th</sup> November due to availability of participants. A report on this meeting would be given at the December meeting.

DP invited Brian Cox, Chair of the "Save the Golf Course" Residents Group to share any update on their correspondence with Bidwells. Brian advised that they had met Bidwells on 7<sup>th</sup> September, and had submitted a proposal outlining some options to retain a working golf course/club on the land. They had received a response to these proposals on 26<sup>th</sup> October; unfortunately, Bidwells confirmed that the options to retain as a 9- or 11-hole course would not be taken up and that they were continuing with their original plans (as reported at the last meeting).

DP reported that a meeting between Great Denham and Biddenham Parish Councils and Bidwells regarding security arrangements for the land and buildings had taken place on 9<sup>th</sup>

October. Both Parish Councils had stressed the significant concerns of residents regarding security post-closure. Bidwells have issued a statement regarding their security arrangements and this has been published on the PC website.

DP also reported that prospective tenants for the Clubhouse had requested a meeting with representatives of Biddenham and Great Denham Parish Councils and this meeting had taken place on 28<sup>th</sup> October. Whilst the prospective tenants had outlined their plans, both Councils made clear that they would be offering no comment on these plans in advance of receipt of a planning application. No planning application has yet been made; once received it will be reviewed at a Parish Council meeting, which is our standard practice, and considered in the light of all material considerations and policies in force.

#### Nomination as Asset of Community Value

Sections 87-108 of the Localism Act 2011 gives Parish Councils the right to nominate an asset of community value to be added to a list maintained by their principal authority. If any listed asset then comes up for sale, parish councils will be given an opportunity to express an interest in purchasing the asset and another window of opportunity to bid to purchase it. Once registered, an asset will stay on the list for a period of 5 years. A building or land is considered to be of community value if in the opinion of the local authority the use of the asset furthers the social well-being or social interests of the local community – this includes cultural interests, recreational interests and sporting interests.

The Parish Council referred to this at their July Meeting and has sought further advice from Bedford Borough Council. BBC have advised that, with regard to the Golf Course land and buildings, a nomination could be made for each component individually or in combination. DP advised that the Parish Council has received a proposal from the Save the Great Denham Community Group to nominate the land and buildings of the Great Denham Golf Course as an Asset of Community Value. The Group's proposal is to nominate the Clubhouse, Land and Greenkeepers Compound as a single nomination; their proposal indicates that the ability to raise funds to purchase these assets is viable in their view.

DP noted that it is up to Bedford Borough Council to determine if a nomination is successful and added to the list. The Council discussed the proposal received and confirmed support for the nomination as proposed.

#### **Resolved: All agreed to prepare and submit a nomination for the Buildings and Land of Great Denham Golf Course as an Asset of Community Value.**

Clerk to work with the Save the Golf Course Community Group to prepare the submission.

## **5. Neighbourhood Development Plan**

LE gave a short report following the first meeting of the Steering Group which had taken place on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2020.

- A number of key themes have been identified for inclusion in the plan:
  1. Green Space/open space protection – including golf course land, kickabout, school field, country park, public rights of way
  2. Community facilities – addressing lack of social space/pub, school expansion, medical facilities (doctors, dentists etc), lack of library, provision for young people etc
  3. Identify areas of future development – at the moment there are 3 areas submitted in call for sites.
  4. Building aesthetic and design
  5. Infrastructure – walkways/footpaths, bus routes, parking
  6. Ecology/environment – wildlife, nature facilities, environmental impact
- Application for funding has been started and will be submitted to Locality.

- A number of NDPs from other parishes are being reviewed by the Steering Group to source good practice in terms of policies, approach etc.
- Ensuring the Community Voice is clear in the plan is critical and LE invited anyone interested to joining to the Steering Group and supporting this work to contact the Clerk.

Next meeting of the Steering Group is on Tuesday 10<sup>th</sup> November 2020 at 7.30pm. All meetings are currently being held remotely.

## 6. 21/22 Budget

Council budget for 21/22 will be signed off at January PC meeting, and will inform the Precept request to be submitted to the Borough Council at that time.

The Budget includes costs of administration and regular requirements such as salary payment, insurance, affiliation and registration fees; it also covers annual commitments including CCTV maintenance and monitoring, service and maintenance costs for boiler at the Community Hall (as landlord), and projects/local services that the Parish Council undertakes each year (Christmas lighting, bulb planting etc). Each year an amount of money is made available for grants and donation to local community groups (on application).

Precept for 20/21 (current year) is £60,143.

Councillors were invited to comment on current and potential projects for consideration in next financial year.

CST noted that 20/21 budget included £10,000 for the refresh of Great Portway play area. No work has yet been planned for this, but repainting and cleaning of the surface should be considered. The Borough Council community engagement team has previously offered paint for a community event for this work; whilst this cannot be done at the moment due to Covid, it might be considered once restrictions are eased.

**Action: Clerk to speak to Borough Council team regarding options for painting/refresh, and also professional cleaning of the play area surface.**

CST also advised that, following the current poor performance of the CCTV provider, he is seeking alternative suppliers and quotes in order to improve the service provided. The impact of any dependency of other sites on our CCTV network will be taken in to consideration, in liaison with the CCTV Monitoring Centre at Bedford Borough Council. He will update at the next meeting as part of the next stage of budget discussions.

## 7. Parking

A resident has asked the Parish Council to review the No Verge/No Pavement Parking restriction in force on Lindsey Close, due to the narrowness of this road and the parking practice of some residents which creates obstructions; in particular this makes access difficult for deliveries and emergency vehicles. The Council have discussed this some months ago, and also engaged Highways for advice. The damage caused to pavements through parking on them was noted by the Council at this time; following a meeting with the developer and the Adoptions Manager at Bedford Borough Council a potential option to trial partial pavement parking was not possible and a potential solution of double yellow lines on one side of the street was identified.

Following discussion, the Council were in agreement that the no verge/no pavement parking restrictions should not be removed, but that alternative approaches to avoid parking on pavements and removing obstructive parking should be investigated.

**Action: Clerk to contact Highways for more details on the double yellow lines' solution.**

## 8. Local Services

### a) Covid-19 Briefing

DP reported that she now attends regular meetings for Covid Health Champions, where the Mayor takes the meeting through the latest information and updates.

Any information received from these meetings will be circulated to residents via the Council's mailing list and social media pages. If anyone is interested in becoming a Health Champion then please get in touch.

The continued increase in number of cases remains a concern and all are asked to follow the guidance to reduce transmission.

### b) Update from meeting with Bedford Borough Council re Open Space Management Charge

Councillors met with Bedford Borough Council to review the financial statements and activity related to the Open Space Management Charge. The practice of issuing estimated outturn and forecast figures creates confusion about what is actually being spent on the service provided.

The Borough Council have agreed to provide the actual figures for 2018/19 and 2019/20 and to provide a breakdown of the budget lines. In the future estimated figures will be removed from the letter and final end of year charges will be published.

The Parish Council also raised the issue of the sand surface in the Playhub, and that it has been blown away through strong winds. The Borough are looking at possible replacement surfaces and will provide costings.

**Action: Clerk to chase for update on actions taken at that meeting and report back to Council**

## 9. Community Events and Engagement

### a) Feast Event

This item was deferred from the October Meeting. JR reported that a proposal had been received by the Council from the operators of Feast for a Streetfood event to be held in Great Denham. No financial support from the Council was requested.

Council noted in discussion that this operator had held 2 events in the summer in conjunction with The Eatery and all seemed well-attended by residents. Council were supportive in principal, at the appropriate time following lifting of Covid restrictions on events and gatherings; it was also noted that there would be an opportunity to link up with the Community Hall for this event.

**Action: DP to raise with the Community Hall Management Committee at next meeting.**

### b) Halloween Pumpkin Parade

The event had taken place virtually, with residents encouraged to carve and share pictures of their pumpkins via the Parish Council Facebook Page. 100 pumpkins had been purchased and delivered to all residents who had registered, together with a battery-operated tealight to light up the pumpkins. Over 50 photos had been shared to FB by residents. Council thanked all residents for taking part and sharing their pictures. It was a different sort of Halloween from normal, but parents and children had still been able to enjoy the decorations and activities.

### c) BATPC webinar on communications and engagement

HA reported on a webinar she attended with the Clerk. The webinar was very useful and prompted a number of ideas for the Council to consider to improve engagement and communications, including photos and videos. A number of useful websites for poster-making, photos etc had also been provided.

**Action: HA to work with Clerk to review the website and implement some of the suggestions where possible.**

## **10. Great Denham Community Hall – Fire Alarm Monitoring**

A proposal has been received from the CIO regarding the provision of a monitoring service for the fire alarm. The Council have been asked to cover the costs of this. Clerk confirmed that the building security arrangements meet the requirements of the insurers.

**Resolved: Following discussion the Council agreed to keep on review but not pursue at this time.**

## **11. Planning**

### **a) Planning applications received since last meeting**

3 planning applications have been received for review and comment by Council.

- Application 20/02416/FUL – 15 Woden Gardens. It was noted that this was a resubmission of a previous application already commented on by Council.

**Resolved: No objection but previous comments regarding impact on parking remain valid and to be included in new response.**

- Application 20/22290/S73A – 2 Ripley Link. It was noted that this was retrospective application.

**Resolved: No objection or comments were recorded.**

- Application 20/02381/FUL – 2 Carnoustie Drive.

**Resolved: No objection or comments were recorded.**

### **b) Street Trading Licence – Dessert Boss**

Council reviewed the details and locations contained in this licence in relation to Great Denham. The Council is supportive of the application in general but would like the following comments to be taken into consideration regarding its operation in Great Denham:

- The Council objects to the inclusion of sites outside Great Denham Primary School (location 309) and would ask that these be removed
- The Council requests that the operator pays attention to the parking congestion on roads; parking is a significant issue within Great Denham and we would ask the operator to park responsibly at all times. Please also ensure that entrances and exits to drives and parking areas are not blocked.
- The Council has noted 3 locations that it considers to be unsuitable/hazardous – locations 349 and 350 (King Alfred Way) and Location 313 (Kingswood Way/Great Portway).

**Resolved: Clerk to respond on this basis**

## **12. Boundary Commission Review and report**

The report and recommendations have been published and are now out for consultation; this closed on 7<sup>th</sup> December. It includes the recommendation that Great Denham become a Ward in its own right, due to its size and projected growth; these changes, if adopted, will come into effect at the 2023 Local Elections.

The Council welcomes the proposals in the report regarding Great Denham. They are in line with Council's previous comments and response and will enable Great Denham to have more localised representation, recognising the character and identify of this young development.

**Resolved: Clerk to submit Council response before the closing date of 7<sup>th</sup> December.**

### 13. Borough Councillors Report

JW had made apologies and left the meeting. However, his report is attached to the end of these minutes for information.

### 14. 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 published on the website. All receipts were available for inspection

**Resolved: All payments were approved and all Bacs payments approved by two councillors. Invoices will be initialled outside the meeting as soon as possible.**

#### b) Update on action from previous meetings

Clerk reported progress on a number of actions from previous meetings not already covered in tonight's agenda.

- Cold Calling Signs – large signs for lampposts are no longer available and have been replaced by window stickers. The Borough Council are sending a supply of these to the Clerk for residents to request. Once received their availability will be published on website and social media.
- Replacement of trees on Kingswood Way – awaiting funds from Ward Fund application, suppliers have been identified.
- SID has now been installed on Kingswood Way and is working; installation of solar panels to be completed.
- Benches in Country Park – they have been included in the current tender being managed by Bedford Borough Council.

#### c) SLCC Membership for Clerk

**Resolved: it was agreed to renew this membership for Clerk. Invoice to be paid.**

#### d) Payroll Services Provision

Clerk advised that Bedford Brough Council have informed us that they will no longer be providing this service from beginning of new financial year. Clerk had asked other parish councils for details of their payroll service providers and will follow up with a recommendation for a replacement provider at a future meeting.

#### e) Meeting dates for 2021

**Resolved: Meeting dates agreed and will be published on website and noticeboards.**

### 15. Correspondence

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

**Resolved: No correspondence required discussion.**

### 16. Any Other Business

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

- Clerk advised that, due to the new lockdown restrictions, the VERU project sessions due to start at the Community hall from 6<sup>th</sup> November will be rescheduled for the new year.
- The Community Hall will be closed in line with the government guidance from close of business Wednesday 4<sup>th</sup> November 2020.

### 17. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> December 2020