



GREAT DENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Great Denham Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 2nd March 2020 in Great Denham Community Hall, 86-88 Saxon Way, Great Denham, MK40 4GP

Present:

Parish Councillors: Donna Parsons (DP) - Chair; Michael Cuthbertson (MC); Jo Ruskin (JR); Chris Slinn (CSL); Chris Staite (CST)

Borough Councillor: Jim Weir (JW)

Parish Clerk: Anna O'Meara (AOM)

Members of the Public: 2 members of the public in attendance

Public Questions

The meeting was adjourned for public questions as follows:

- Can the speed limit around Great Denham (and especially around the Retail Centre) be reduced to 20mph?
DP explained that the Council is already pursuing this with both the developers and the Borough Council; whilst the development was (apparently) designed to be 20mph area using various traffic calming measures (e.g. raised block paving areas) it is clear that drivers continue to speed in some areas of Great Denham.
- A resident congratulated the Parish Council on the daffodil planting along King Alfred Way, and also recognised the efforts of volunteers on Kingswood Way. The flowers are blooming and look wonderful!
- What is the future of the Great Denham Community Choir?
Although this group is not organised by the Parish Council, MC offered the view that as long as attendance continues the Choir will thrive.
- Is there any update on the opening date for the Pavilion?
DP noted that this is still not known. The lease for the cafe is in place. Once the Council has any more information it will let residents know; the Council is hoping to be able to run Litter Picks from the Pavilion once open.

The meeting was re-opened.

1. Apologies

Apologies were received from Councillors Helen Allen and Lou Evans.

Resolved: The apologies were accepted.

2. Declarations of Interest

DP declared a non-pecuniary interest as trustees of Great Denham Community Hall (GDCH). CST declared a non-pecuniary interest in grant application from Scouts (item 10 f)

3. Minutes of the last meeting

Resolved: The minutes were agreed as an accurate record and signed by DP.

Signed by Chair Date.....
Agreed at Extra Ordinary meeting 26th March 2020

02/03/20 Final

4. Traffic and Parking

a) Speed Indicator Displays

CST has investigated signage available based on size and loading on lampposts. Some of the lampposts in Great Denham may not be suitable to attach signs to, given the loading and it may be more appropriate to install stand-alone poles, as is done by other Parish Councils, so that the SIDs can be attached to these. He has investigated the costs of these, and has been quoted £70 + £15 delivery for each pole; installation costs would be additional and locations will need to be agreed. Planning permission may be required, and adequate power supply will also be needed (possible feed from lampposts).

Resolved: Council agreed to proceed with standalone posts. Clerk to investigate what applications are required to fulfil this, with both Borough Council and Developer.

b) Pedestrian Crossings

A potential crossing on Anglia Way (near the Retail Centre) was discussed and resolved at the September meeting. Guidance from Highways on this matter is not clear, but residents continue to raise the need for this via social media/emails etc. MC proposed that a feasibility study would be the best route for the Council to take to determine whether it is possible and if so best location. It was noted that a pedestrian crossing will require significant funding if feasible. MC proposed that the Council review the September resolution (in line with Council Standing Orders) and now request a feasibility study is undertaken.

Resolved: It was agreed to request a feasibility study for a pedestrian crossing on this section of Anglia Way; this is likely to cost in the region of £3500.

2 further locations were discussed: on Greenkeepers Road, crossing to the School by the entrance features; and on the junction of Mercia Road/Greenkeepers Road. Both the locations have been raised previously in public questions/correspondence to the Council. DP noted that Highways had advised to wait until other measures had been implemented (CCTV outside the school, railings outside Kingswood Way entrance, lower speed limits) and had taken effect before considering pedestrian crossings.

It was noted by Council after discussion that, given the funding requirements it would need to understand whether a feasibility study can take place along the whole stretch of Greenkeepers Road (from school to Mercia Road junction) to determine best location for a crossing, in order to prioritise effort.

Action: Clerk to enquire with Highways on scope of a feasibility study in this location and report back to Council in order for Council to decide on next steps.

5. Consultations

a) Bedford Borough Council – Scrutiny and Overview Committee

The Council is inviting input on areas of focus for this Committee.

Resolved: Council agreed to request the Committee look into Management of Green Spaces and Open Space Management Charge.

b) Electoral Review Consultation

Bedford Borough Council has asked the Boundary Commission to review the number of Ward Councillors and Ward boundaries. The proposal is to increase from 40 to 46 councillors. JW highlighted that he had previously written to the Boundary Commission re the size of Kempston Rural Ward (of which Great Denham is part), as with the build of houses, this was already 71% bigger than an average ward, and will grow more. Comments on options are invited: Great Denham will be big enough to be a standalone Ward, or make Kempston Rural a 2-Councillor Ward. Any changes would come into effect from 2023 Local Elections. All Councillors can respond to consultation as individuals.

Resolved: it was agreed to comment as the Council that support was for Great Denham to be a standalone ward, given its size and projected growth.

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02/03/20 Final

6. Recent Meetings

a) Meeting with Developer (David Wilson Homes) on 6th February 2020

MC reported back from this meeting (attended by MC and Clerk). DWH intend to be off-site by the end of 2020. A number of items were progressed at the meeting:

- 3 missing streetlights and a further 3 streetlights without power on King Alfred Way/Anglia Way – these are being addressed, awaiting dates for the work.
- Missing street signs on King Alfred Way/Anglia Way – signs have now been installed on the E side of road, awaiting signs on W side of road.
- Fencing at end of Danegeld was impacting visibility for traffic – this has been removed.
- Rowan Close fencing – DWH have sent fencing plans through, some remedial work will be done.
- Improvement to overflow car parks at Pavilion – this is on the snagging list between DWH and the Borough Council; the Parish Council has written to the Borough highlighting concerns and the need to upgrade these, given impact on parking there.
- Pavements/Kerbs on King Alfred Way/Anglia Way – this will be a major programme of work, and clear communications to residents has been requested before this starts. The contractor (Phoenix) will start this once they have finished in Kempston.
- Missing parking bays on King Alfred Way – these will be done as part of the Phoenix work (above).
- A question was asked whether there will be a bus shelter on King Alfred Way.

Action: to check the plans for this.

b) Town and Parish Council Network Meeting 11th February 2020

MC reported back from this meeting. Presentations and updates were given by Chief Office Planning and Highways, including CIL (Community Infrastructure Levy), Local Plan 2030, E-W rail, upgrade of Black Cat roundabout.

- Bromham Road Bridge – this will open 1-way from April
- Britannia Road works will be completed in April
- A6 Wilstead closure – the road is planned to open next week.
- Ashburnham Road/Shakespeare Road – work is being done on crossings at the mini-roundabout to improve pedestrian safety.
- Ampthill Road – resurfacing work will be done in the summer
- High Street – changes to single lane – this will be done after the Riverfest.

7. Community Events and Engagement

a) Annual Parish Meeting – 28th March 2020

The following groups have confirmed they will be participating: Tea and Talk, Community Hall CIO, Streetwatch, Neighbourhood Watch, Friends of Great Denham, Great Denham Brownies and Rainbows. We are also hoping to get confirmation from Great Denham Park Run, Great Denham Runners and Great Denham Community Choir.

b) Great British Spring Clean – Litter Pick 5th April 2020

DP has confirmed with the school regarding holding the poster competition, and also the Chair of the Community Hall to confirm posters can be displayed as in previous years. Posters advertising the event will go up on Parish Council noticeboards shortly.

c) Letter from Richard Fuller MP

DP reported that she has received a letter from the MP, who is keen to understand local issues. Following discussion, it was agreed that the Open Space Management charge and the provision of land for the School (space for sports etc) are most pressing.

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02/03/20 Final

The MP is also offering to host visits to the House of Commons for anyone interested and has sent posters for Parish Council noticeboards.

8. Preparing for 2019/20 Audit

a) Effectiveness of Internal Audit

Resolved: It was unanimously agreed that all the criteria of the Effectiveness of Internal Audit were met and the document was signed by DP (copy attached).

b) Risk Register

Resolved: The updated risk register was agreed.

c) Asset Register

This has been updated to include the recent CCTV extension; benches and bins recently installed in the Community Garden are still to be added.

Resolved: Council agreed Asset Register, including addition of benches and bins.

d) Reserves Policy

Following feedback from Internal Auditor, a Reserves Policy for the Council has been drafted; this outlines the different types of reserves the Council may hold and how these are treated.

Resolved: Reserves Policy agreed and adopted by Council.

e) Fidelity Guarantee

Resolved: The Fidelity Guarantee of £150k which is included in Council Insurance was agreed to be adequate for Council needs at this time.

9. Borough Councillors Report

JW gave a brief update on a number of items:

- Police Crime Commissioner Election – Kathryn Holloway will not be standing again; the Conservatives have selected their candidate.
- E-W rail – there are a number of consultation/briefing dates for the public. Information can be found on website www.eastwestrail.co.uk
- Bedford Hospital Trust merger – information can be found on the Hospital website
- Clinical Commissioning Group – there is some speculation that the Bedford and Milton Keynes groups will merge, but no confirmation as yet.
- Electoral Boundary review – see above (5b)
- Bedford Borough Council has agreed its budget for 2020/21 of £366M
- JW is arranging to meet Richard Fuller MP regarding the Open Space Management charge.
- Golf Club – JW has received a number of enquiries about the lease renewal, as the Golf Club are currently only offering 6-month membership renewals. He is making enquiries to get more information.
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10. 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 100428 was signed by DP and MC.

Signed by Chair Date.....
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02/03/20 Final

b) To agree continued use of standing orders, direct debits and BACS for banking.
Resolved: this was agreed.

c) BBC Payroll Services

Resolved: it was agreed to continue use of Borough Council Payroll Services for 2020/21

d) Standing Orders

Following review and discussion at last meeting a final version of both financial and non-financial orders had been circulated to Council.

Resolved: Updated version of Financial and Non-Financial Standing Orders for the Council were approved.

e) New Councillor Training

Resolved: A place on New Councillor Training was approved for Councillor Allen. Clerk to arrange.

f) Grant Applications.

Applications have been received from 2 organisations:

Country Days – this organisation provides 2-day activity courses for children, based in Felmersham. The courses are paid for, and the organisation also offers places at reduced cost where there is identified need. A request for £1000 had been received as a grant application.

It was noted by the Council that whilst bookings are open to anyone, the take-up from Great Denham residents was extremely low (4 in 2019, 6 in 2018); similar activities provided are now part of the Forest Leader Curriculum at Great Denham Primary School.

Resolved: the application for funding was denied.

Bedfordshire Scouts – CST had declared a non-pecuniary interest in this item as he is a local Scout Leader.

The Leslie Sell Activity Centre in Bromham is currently under construction and is due for completion this summer; construction is funded by the Bedfordshire Freemasons; Bedfordshire Scouts have also committed £100k to complete the interior, and are fundraising to pay for the interior fit-out. This application is for a contribution towards these fit-out funds. It was noted by Council that this centre is used quite frequently by a number of local scout groups for activities; there are currently 40 scout members from Great Denham (across 4 local groups).

Resolved: a donation of £400 will be made towards fit-out costs, under S137.

Resolved: £1300 will be moved from Community Events line to Grants/Donations line in 2019/20 budget to cover this.

11. Correspondence

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

Resolved: No correspondence required discussion.

12. Any Other Business

No other matters were discussed.

13. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 6th April 2020

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02/03/20 Final