



GREAT DENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the extra ordinary meeting of Great Denham Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 17th August 2020. The meeting was held remotely using Zoom.

Present:

Parish Councillors: Donna Parsons (DP) - Chair;); Chris Staite (CST);); Helen Allen (HA); Vince Arthur (VA)

Borough Councillor: Jim Weir (JW) Kempston Rural, Roger Rigby and Jon Gambold (Bromham and Biddenham) also in attendance.

Parish Clerk: Anna O'Meara (AOM)

Members of the Public: 6 members of the public

Public Questions

The meeting was adjourned for public questions as follows:

There were no public questions and the meeting was re-opened.

1. Apologies

Apologies have been received from Louise Evans, Jo Ruskin and Chris Slinn.

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 extra ordinary meeting held 15th July 2020 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by DP.

4. Local Services

DP updated the Council on the engagement of a Planning Barrister to provide advise on the following 3 questions relating to the Golf Course and the anticipated closure by the landowners.

1. Whether there is any case law to back up the link between the golf club needing to remain in light of the initial application which was for 100 houses and the golf club; and

2. Whether the Conditions attached to Planning Permissions 97/00141/REM and 97/01288/REM in effect remove the Permitted Development rights and that should a change of use be sought, this should be done via a full planning application and not as a Prior Approval; and

3. How long the land would need to be left fallow/for pasture land before it could be considered to have a nil use? We are concerned that the landowner is doing this so that he overcomes any requirement to demonstrate a lack of need for sport/leisure use as per the present Local Plan Policy 99.

The Extraordinary meeting was called to consider a Parish Council contribution to the costs of this (£1000 +VAT) should a shortfall in funding occur; Biddenham Parish Council are also holding an Extra Ordinary Meeting on Wednesday 19th August to consider the same

Signed by Chair

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proposal. It was noted that since calling the meeting the GoFundMe appeal started by the resident had now raised sufficient funds to cover the expected cost of this advice, and that a Community Group of Residents was being formed to direct and manage any future activity to campaign against the golf course closure and also the protection of the green space and urban gap. The first meeting of the Community Group will take place on Thursday 20th August in order to form a committee and draw up a constitution.

DP invited JW to give an update. He reported that that he had spoken to the Director for Planning and Chief Exec of Bedford Borough Council about robustly defending the Local Plan policies which protect the Urban Gap (AD43) and Sports and Leisure Facilities (Policy 99). Whilst planning conditions on the building will only be invoked when an application is received, he has asked them to write pre-emptively to the landowners (Old Ford End Trust) and their agents (Bidwells) to reinforce that presence of planning conditions on any proposed change of use for the buildings.

JW advised that he has seeking an opportunity to discuss any potential business and community solution to retain the golf course, and is exploring what could be done through the Borough Council, e.g. reduction/suspension of business rates payments.

It was noted that the advice from the planning barrister was expected on 28th August; a meeting has also been arranged by Richard Fuller MP with Bidwells on 4th September, the Borough Councillors will also be attending. Once these meetings have taken place a clearer picture of future requirements may be available.

The Council was invited to consider allocating further financial support; following discussion it was resolved that:

- **The Council stated its support for the community efforts to prevent the golf course closure and protection of the Urban Gap.**
- **The Council will provide support to future activity, including funds where available, subject to the details of the activity and costs being known and available budget.**
- **At this point in time there is no specific requirement to earmark funds for this, but this may be done in the future.**
- **The Council may require funding on its own account for planning advice at a point in the future when an application is being considered.**
- **The Council welcomes any application from a constituted group for funding/a donation towards costs of activity. All applications received are considered in line with the Grants Policy.**
- **A standing item will be included on future meeting agendas to enable the Council to respond quickly, and where necessary another extra ordinary meeting will be called if required.**
- **Use of the Council Zoom account will be offered to the Community Group to enable them to meet remotely until guidance on face to face meetings allows.**

Following a comment about lack of knowledge about the closure from a resident, DP advised that the PC were putting together a newsletter which will be delivered to all residents in next few weeks; this will include what information is available regarding the golf course, plus other local matters. It is recognised that all residents are not currently aware of the proposed closure, it is hoped the newsletter will inform them.

5. Planning

- a) Planning application 20/01584/FUL – single storey rear extension, porch (PD), hardstanding (PD) and erection of way up to 2 metres high around rear garden. 43 Great Portway, Great Denham

Council have reviewed the plans and recorded no objections or comments on this application.

Resolved: Clerk to respond to Planning as no objection/no comments.

6. Finance and Clerk's Report

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

The latest finance report was available; no invoice required authorisation.

Resolved: Finance Report was accepted.

- b) Update on other actions

Clerk reported on the following actions from previous meetings:

- Overgrown Vegetation on the entrance to the river walk had been reported to the Borough Council
- Highways had been contacted regarding the double yellow lines at junctions; specific locations are being identified and permission from the developer will be sought in advance of this work. The work will be prioritised on finished roads as phase 1, with a further phase once the resurfacing of King Alfred Way/Anglia Way had been completed.
- DP advised that the Gateway feature on Greenkeepers Road had now been removed by developers as part of the pre-adoption work for Greenkeepers Road.
- The flagpole “pipes” outside the school have still not been removed, and are a trip hazard. DP advised that she had previously asked DWH to remove these. **Action: Clerk/DP to chase removal.**

7. Correspondence

A list of all correspondence received since 14th July had been circulated to Council.

Resolved: No correspondence required discussion.

8. Any Other Business

No other business was raised.

9. Date of Next Meeting

Next scheduled meeting is 7th September 2020.