



## GREAT DENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of Great Denham Parish Council held at 7.30pm on Monday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2022. The meeting was held in the Great Denham Community Hall, Great Denham. It was also available via Zoom for members of the public

### **Present:**

**Parish Councillors:** Chris Staite (CST) (Chair); Vince Arthur (VA); Helen Allen (HA); Chris Slinn (CSL)

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

**Borough Councillor:** Jim Weir (JW)

**Members of the Public:** 3 members of the public in attendance

**Guest Speakers:** Amy Plumb and Antony Horton-Tilley, Gusto Catering

### **Public Questions:**

No questions were raised by members of the public.

### **1. Apologies**

Apologies have been received from Councillors Louise Evans, Jo Ruskin and Donna Parsons (Donna Parsons attended via Zoom as a member of the public).

**Resolved: Apologies were accepted.**

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

No interests declared by Councillors present.

### **3. Minutes of January 2022 meeting**

**Resolved: The minutes of the meeting held 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 were agreed as an accurate record and signed by CST.**

### **4. Co-Option into vacancies**

The Parish Council has 2 vacant positions for councillors and interest has been received from a resident, Ryan Craze.

**Resolved: Agreed unanimously to co-opt Ryan Craze to Great Denham Parish Council (Proposed VA, Seconded HA). Ryan Craze signed Declaration of Acceptance of Office, witnessed by Clerk, and joined remaining proceedings.**

### **5. Guest Speaker – New operators of Archers Rest Café, Great Denham Pavilion**

Amy Plumb (Operations Director) and Antony Horton-Tilley (Managing Director) of Gusto Catering introduced themselves and shared layout designs for the new Archers Rest Café with Councillors. Gusto Catering is a Bedfordshire based company with over 12 years' experience of managing similar cafés, bars and events. They have already been posting on local social media groups and reported that the response from residents has been very positive. Work has started on the refurbishment of the space, and although delayed due to availability of supplies/workmen, they hope to be in a position to open during March.

Following questions from Councillors, Amy confirmed that buggy parking would be provided for families using the café, that patio seating will be provide, that opening hours will be 7 days each week, with hours varying between winter and summer seasons. They will hold a restaurant licence for alcohol. Recruitment of staff is underway, and the majority of the staff

are local to Great Denham. Until the café opens, a licence for a coffee cart has been obtained, and the extension of this as an ongoing service will be explored with the Borough Council.

The Council outlined their intention to hold community events in the future, including litter picks in the Country Park, and would welcome support from Gusto for these, where appropriate.

CST thanked Amy and Antony for attending tonight's meeting. Following the presentation and questions/discussion Amy and Antony left the meeting.

## **6. Budget 2022/23**

The 2022/23 Budget document has been amended to reflect the discussion at January meeting.

**Resolved: The budget was approved and CST signed the budget as Chair of the meeting.**

## **7. Internal Audit**

Each year the Council must confirm that the arrangements for its internal audit are satisfactory and effective.

**Resolved: Effectiveness of Internal Audit summary agreed and signed by CST as Chair.**

## **8. S104 Agreement**

As agreed at a previous meeting the Council had sought legal advice on this agreement, received from DWH regarding Anglia Water. Legal advice had been received indicating that the Council should not be a party to this agreement. Confirmation has now been received from DWH solicitor that the amended agreement no longer includes the Parish Council is no longer a party and therefore is not a signatory.

**Resolved: Parish Council involvement as party and signatory to this agreement is not required.**

## **9. Highways – Consultation for extension of Council powers for moving traffic offences**

Bedford Borough Council is inviting views on its plans to apply for an extension of its powers under the Traffic Management Act (2022). Council discussed the proposal and noted that this is a consultation re support in principle and that full details of how this would be operated are not yet available. Council noted that any enforcement should be adequately resourced if this extension of powers was to show benefit, that any efforts made by the police should not be reduced or affected and that it is hoped that the additional effort required to manage any extension of powers would be self-funding through enforcement. Parking and traffic issues remain a concern in Great Denham.

**Resolved: Response to consultation agreed to support in principle with comments reflecting the discussion to be submitted.**

## **10. Community Events**

### **a) Queen's Platinum Jubilee**

As actioned at the January meeting residents have been surveyed on their preferences for celebration of the Jubilee weekend (2<sup>nd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> June): a Big Lunch (bring your own picnic), individual street parties with neighbours, a commemorative item for the community (Plaque, tree) or commemorative items for either schoolchildren or households. Clerk reported that

the response received from this indicates that preference for a Big Lunch type event is 3 times greater than next preference of a street party with neighbours.

**Action: Proposal for Big Lunch type event (Community picnic) to be developed and brought back to March meeting. Great Denham Community Hall Trustees will be invited to work on this as a joint initiative, given their experience with providing Community Events.**

b) Community Tree Planting in Country Park

Clerk advised that the Tree Officer for Bedford Borough Council has made contact regarding tree planting in the Country Park to restock some of the woodland block areas/copses.

Volunteers will be invited to help out, and this will be promoted via Borough Council and Parish Council social media/website. A date of 2<sup>nd</sup> March has been proposed.

**Action: Clerk to promote to volunteers in Great Denham to support these efforts.**

## 11. Defibrillator for Great Denham Pavilion

The Parish Council agreed a budget of £4000 for the purchase of 2 defibrillators at its July meeting last year: one for Carnoustie Drive and one for the Pavilion. Clerk reported that the defib for Carnoustie Drive has been delivered and we are waiting for Highways to install the post so that the cabinet can be mounted securely. Clerk has now received a quote for the purchase of the Pavilion defibrillator from Community Heartbeat Trust, and is also awaiting a quote from the Borough Council for the necessary electrical work to install on the Pavilion building; a budget breakdown has been provided and additional funding is required.

**Resolved: additional of budget up to £700 was agreed to complete installation of both defibrillators.**

## 12. Golf Course Update

No further update on the land or buildings has been received. It was noted that work has been done to clean out one of the ponds, and that mud and golf balls have been discharged into the drains leading to the river, which has been reported to the Environment Agency.

## 13. Neighbourhood Development Plan

Clerk reported that the new Design Code has now been published and will form part of the submission when the Neighbourhood Plan is ready. A newsletter to update residents is planned before the end of March.

## 14. Planning and licensing

a) Planning application 21/01582/FUL – 95 houses on land to W and E of Mercia Road, Great Denham

This is a replan of the previous application, and has reduced the number of houses from 101 to 95. Council previously submitted an objection with comments to the original application. Councillors have had an opportunity to review the revised application and it has also been published to residents for their information. In discussion Council noted that:

- The concerns regarding the impact on parking, the use of parking courts, the availability and location of visitor spaces, and the increased burden on on-street parking still remain. In particular the location of allocated spaces at some distance from the property they relate to will result in parking on street, and contribution to congestion.
- The location of some footpaths in relation to highways/shared space parking areas remain hazardous for pedestrians.
- Council agreed with the comments and issues documented in the report from the Highways Officer, and noted that the issues arising from the layout of other areas of the Great Denham development, for example, courtyard parking, coach house parking, insufficient and badly laid-out visitor parking and on-street parking, had not been taken

into account with the revised plans and the developer had not demonstrated any learning from earlier phases.

- The number of houses, whilst reduced, will still have a significant and detrimental impact on the overall aspect of this part of Great Denham, and in particular will only increase the traffic issues already being experienced at the junction of Saxon Way/Mercia Road and also Danegeld Avenue.
- Whilst the revised plans now included some green space, the Council believe this remains limited in size, and in particular noted that the proposed landscaping plan would include tree planting which would cover this area and make it unusable as a community space. The retention of a community space was a key element of the Council's previous objection, and these revised plans did not provide a satisfactory solution to this requirement.
- The Council also noted that the proposed green space is not identified as adoptable by the Borough Council, and that any transfer to a management company would be detrimental to its use as a community space, given the performance of the various management companies already in operation in Great Denham.
- The Council stressed that the management company model has not worked in Great Denham, it has resulted in very poor service for residents and uncontrolled charges. The Council recommends that the management company model is not implemented here.
- The Council was pleased to see that the additional land marked out for the school has been identified and no building is being proposed on this. However, the initial concerns about the overall size of the school, the increased burden that an additional 95 houses will place on the school even with additional land, and the request that the Borough Council consider instead to use the land E of Mercia Road to build a second school building remain valid.

**Resolved: Council resolved to object to the revised plans on the material considerations and concerns outlined in discussion.**

**Action: Clerk to send a formal thank you to highways for their report on the planning application for the extent, detail and deep understanding shown of the issues across the development.**

b) Planning application 22/00119/S73 – variation of planning conditions, 12 and 12A Vicars Close, Biddenham

Council noted that this application is for an adjoining parish and that it has previously reviewed and responded to earlier applications for this site (19/00021/FUL and 19/01564/FUL refer). Council objected to application 19/0021/FUL on the basis of the presence of an access road and intended access to the green space behind Vicars Close; this green space (the former golf course land) sits in the parish of Great Denham and forms part of the green buffer between settlements. Council noted that the revised plans still provide a clear path for vehicles between the properties and that an additional access gate that does not currently exist has been provided to the field behind.

**Resolved: Comment that no reinstatement of access to the green space behind this plot must be made and that the green buffer between the settlements of Great Denham and Biddenham must be retained.**

c) Street Trading Licences – Awesome Coffee and Eat Gelato

**Resolved: Council have reviewed these and have no comments or objections.**

## 15. Borough Councillors Report

JW has provided a written copy of his report which will be circulated to Council and will be published on the Parish Council website. JW gave a brief verbal update on the following:

- JW continues to challenge the Borough Council on its proposed budget.

- JW continues to challenge the levy of the Open Space Management charge on Great Denham residents on the basis of its unfairness.
- The locations for average speed cameras have now been confirmed.
- £77,000 remains to be allocated in Rural Affairs grant. Clerk asked JW to consider viability of Parish Council requesting funding for improvements in the Country Park/Pavilion area.
- Stagecoach services are being reduced due to impact of Covid on passenger numbers. CSL reported that the number 8 bus between Great Denham and Bedford centre has been affected by this.

•

## 16. 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: The Finance report was noted and approved.**

- b) Renewal of subscription – The Loop

**Resolved: Council agreed renewal of subscription at cost of £10.**

- c) Update on actions from previous meetings

Clerk gave a brief update on the following:

- The meeting with Highways actioned at January Council meeting has taken place with JW, Clerk and Highways officer to look at traffic and road safety issues at the junctions of Kingswood Way/Saxon Way/Great Portway and Saxon Way/Anglia Way. Highways Officer has proposed some work and we are awaiting confirmation that this has been programmed in.
- The rubbish bin for Carnoustie Drive/St Mellion Drive has been requested to the Borough Council.
- The Village Medical Centre has been contacted and is considering request to enable the other businesses on the site to have access to the staff car park in an effort to relieve parking at entrance to Great Portway.

## 17. Correspondence

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

**Resolved: No correspondence required follow up.**

## 18. Any Other Business

Clerk noted that the following had been received and will be brought to Council for approval at appropriate time:

- BATPC affiliation fees – these have been budgeted for in 22/23 and are due for payment by June 2022.
- Pension auto-enrolment renewal – must be completed by September 2022.

## 19. Date of Next Meeting

Monday 7<sup>th</sup> March 2022

**APPENDIX - Finance Summary to 31<sup>st</sup> January 2022****Bank Balances**

Treasurer current account - £81,280.38 BMM deposit account - £120,094.02

**Receipts since December report**

| Date         | From | Detail                      | £           |
|--------------|------|-----------------------------|-------------|
| 21/01/2022   | HSBC | Interest on deposit account | 1.02        |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |      |                             | <b>1.02</b> |

**Payments since December report (figures include VAT)**

| Payment type | Payee                        | Detail                                            | £               |
|--------------|------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------|-----------------|
| BACS         | HSBC                         | Monthly account fee                               | 8.00            |
| BACS         | Beds Borough Council         | Purchase of 2 benches for Country Park            | 1208.50         |
| BACS         | Pam Anthony Payroll Services | Provision of service Oct-Dec                      | 37.50           |
| BACS         | Clerk/HMRC                   | Salary payment and NI/PAYE                        | 1155.25         |
| BACS         | DJT Surfacing                | Installation work – benches in Country Park       | 1039.43         |
| BACS         | Cllr Ruskin                  | Reimbursement of expenses – Light Up Great Denham | 70.19           |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |                              |                                                   | <b>3,518.87</b> |

**Payments for approval (figures include VAT)**

| Payment type | Payee    | Detail               | £         |
|--------------|----------|----------------------|-----------|
| BACS         | The Loop | Subscription renewal | 10        |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |          |                      | <b>10</b> |

**Committed funds not yet invoiced (work to be completed) figures excl VAT**

|                     |            | £             |
|---------------------|------------|---------------|
| Pedestrian crossing | Anglia Way | 40,000        |
| Defibrillators      | Pavilion   | 1565          |
| <b>TOTAL</b>        |            | <b>41,565</b> |