

GREAT DENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of The Great Denham Parish Council Meeting held on 15th January 2024 at 7.30pm at Great Denham Community Hall.

MINUTES

Present: Cllrs Chris Staite (Chairman), Helen Allen, Anna O'Meara, Janice Moran, Joanna Szaub-Newton, Jim Weir (also Borough Councillor), Jon Hannah, Joe Quinn, Robbin Brough (Parish Council Clerk).

1 **Apologies for Absence:** None

2 **Declarations of interest in items on the agenda:** None

3 **Public Open Session**

A resident requested an update on the country park pathway funding he had seen in the parish council budget. *The parish council has asked BBC to consider making improvements to the current pathway surfacing. The clerk received a quote for the works which was passed on to BBC. BBC wanted to add additional specs for tenders to consider when quoting. The funds that have been set aside by the council are for a possible contribution to the works should they go forward.*

A resident enquired as to why the number 8 bus no longer stops at the bus shelter near the Park & Ride. *Cllr Weir informed the resident there will be a new bus shelter installed at the new bus stop location on the opposite side of the Park & Ride. The old shelter will remain in place as this stop is still used for school buses to collect and drop off students daily.*

4 **Correspondence received since the last meeting (requiring council attention)**

Council received an email from a resident asking for an update on the management fees discussions.

A response to this query was covered in the Borough Councillors report (Item 13)

A resident emailed to request assistance in having a loose manhole casing raised to the appropriate land owner on Lavender Lane. *The clerk contacted the developer and they are investigating the issue.*

A resident emailed to request the council look into the matter of dogs off leads in the park. They would like the council to consider the creation of a dog-friendly area. *This request has been raised before with BBC who own and manage the country park. **Action:** Clerk to contact BBC to see if they will reconsider the request.*

A resident emailed to raise a concern with the amount of dog fouling on pathways leading to the country park. **Action:** Clerk will contact BBC to enquire if they have a scheme for rewarding individuals who report dog fouling.

A resident emailed to ask whether the parish council would be interested in purchasing the original builder's architectural model of the Great Denham development. **Action:** Clerk to request a photo and dimensions of the model.

5 **To confirm the minutes of the parish council meeting held on 4th December 2023**

Resolved to approve the minutes of the meeting as an accurate record.

6 **Co-option**

To consider coopting to fill any of the three remaining positions – the total number of positions on the council is nine.

Resolved to coopt Jon Hannah to the council. (Proposer: Cllr Szaub-Newton. Second: Cllr O'Meara).

Resolved to coopt Joe Quinn to the council. (Proposer: Cllr Staite. Second: Cllr Allen).

7 **Clerk's report on actions not covered by agenda items**

- To contact StageCoach to see if the bus still stops at the Park & Ride bus shelter. **Complete** – *StageCoach confirmed the bus no longer stops at this area near the Park & Ride.*
- To contact Sainsburys to ask if they could support the Carol Event by donating mince pies. **Complete** – *donation of 100 mince pies received.*
- To chase Bedford Borough Council (BBC) Highways for the Green Keepers Feasibility Study- **Awaiting reply.**

*Mrs R Brough, Clerk, Great Denham Parish Council
E-mail: clerk@greatdenhamparishcouncil.gov.uk*

- To contact BBC Reprographics Team to see if they can assist with the design and production of nature boards to be placed in the Country Park. **Complete** – *Contact has been made and awaiting a reply to confirm whether they have the resources to assist.*
- To ask Highways to confirm they have received council's request to extend the double yellow lines on junctions within the village. **Complete** – *Highways have sent maps outlining the junctions that currently do not have double yellow lines. Council has asked the clerk to have Highways proceed with the process of having double yellows implemented on these junctions.*

8 Finance

- To approve payments and note income and balances.
Resolved *to approve payments as shown in the appendix.*
- To note the Spend versus Budget variance report
Report received and noted. See appendix.
- To agree the 2024/2025 budget and precept.
Resolved *to agree the 2024/2025 budget, which contained a precept set at £41,415. This will be a 3.01% decrease in council tax. A Band D property will see a decrease in council tax of £0.73 for the year.*

9 Community Facilities:

- Update on Installation of gateway sign on King Alfred Way.
Clerk has received the gateway sign. The council is waiting for an installation date from BBC.
- Update on the trees at the bottom of Wayland and Saxon.
Clerk has made contact with the developer who is looking into the landscaping issue and will provide the council with a response in due course.
- Update on standing water on the old golf course.
Both the clerk and Cllr Weir have been in contact with the flood officers at BBC who have promised to look further into this issue. BBC will contact the landowner if there are any works required to rectify the matter of standing water and flooding of the footpath.

10 Junior Park Run

To receive a grant request from Parkrun Ltd for £4800.00 to fund the start up of a weekly junior park run in the Country Park for young people.

Resolved *to grant Parkrun Ltd £1200 to be used towards starting a junior park run in the Country Park.*

Action: *Clerk to provide Parkrun Ltd with the contact details for possible sources of further funding.*

11 Great Denham Primary School

To receive a grant request from Great Denham Primary School for £700.00 to fund the creation of a new sign to be placed in the school office.

Resolved *not to provide funding towards the schools project to place a new sign in the reception area.*

12 Planning Applications:

- To consider any planning applications received since the last meeting – includes any received after the agenda is issued up to the date of the meeting.

APPLICATION NO: 23/02742/FUL Full Planning Application

PROPOSAL: Single storey side extension.

LOCATION: 74 Cantley Road Great Denham Bedford Bedfordshire MK40 4RX

Council **resolved** *to not provide a comment on the above planning application.*

- To note any planning applications decided by the borough council since the last meeting.

APPLICANT : David Wilson Homes (South Midlands) - Mr P Shah

LOCATION : Land Adjacent To Mercia Road Great Denham Bedfordshire

PARTICULARS OF DEVELOPMENT: Development of 95 dwellings and associated Infrastructure

Decision: Bedford Borough Council HEREBY GRANTS PLANNING PERMISSION SUBJECT TO A PLANNING OBLIGATION AND CIL

Council noted the decision made to grant planning permission.

Mrs R Brough, Clerk, Great Denham Parish Council

E-mail: clerk@greatdenhamparishcouncil.gov.uk

13 Borough Councillors Report

Update from Borough Councillor Jim Weir.
See parish council website for full report.

14 Recruitment of Parish Councillors

To discuss how the parish council will engage with the community to recruit councillors to fill the remaining three vacancies.
Councillors agreed to move past this item as two councillors had been co-opted at the beginning of the meeting.

15 Community Event

To discuss the possibility of holding a parish council sponsored community event in the country park. Details such as the type of event, when it will be, and budget will be discussed.
The council has begun to discuss plans for a community event in September. A working group was formed including Cllr Staite, Cllr Moran, Cllr Szaub-Newton and Cllr Quinn.
Action: Clerk to contact BBC Open Spaces and & Community Engagement Team to see which dates in September the country park is not already booked.

16 Double Yellow Lines

To review documents received from BBC Highways Team outlining the existing double yellow lines and the remaining junctions that the parish council may want to install double yellow lines.
Action: Clerk to inform BBC Highways Team of the council's wishes to implement double yellow lines that were outlined on a map provided by the Highways Team. Clerk to request a quote for completion of the works and for clarification on how we obtain permission from the developers for nonadopted roads.

17 Christmas Lights

To consider the purchase of additional Christmas decorations for further columns; suggested locations Queen Eleanor Drive and King Alfred Way.
Action: Clerk to continue to look for further light decoration options that are more reasonably priced.

18 Business for future agendas (No actions can be taken on items not on the agenda)

- Update from Speed Watch Volunteer Group

Date of the next meeting: 5th February 2024, Great Denham Community Hall.

Great Denham Parish Council - Receipts & Payments - Jan 2024

Date	Category	Payee	Description	Income	Gross	VAT	Net	Balance
								61,138.99
04 December 2023	GDCH Tea & Talk	GDCH	GDCH - Tea and Talk room hire from grant £450 - £75 = £375 remaining.		75.00		75.00	
12 December 2023	Banking charges	HSBC	HSBC Account charge		8.00		8.00	
29 December 2023	GDCH expenditure	SPHERETECH LTD	Annual maintenance agreement		292.94	48.82	244.12	
29 December 2023	Training	BATPC	Janice Moran training		35.00		35.00	
29 December 2023	Staff costs	Multiple	Dec Salary & Backdated NJC		1,892.92		1,892.92	
29 December 2023	Admin - other	BBC	Election admin costs		45.73		45.73	58,769.41
	Not yet paid GDCH Tea & Talk	GDCH	GDCH - Tea and Talk room hire from grant £375 - £75 = £300 remaining.		75.00		75.00	
	Not yet paid Hall hire	GDCH	GDCH - Room hire		20.00		20.00	
	Not yet paid Gateway sign	Glasdon	Gateway sign		989.46	164.91	824.55	57,684.95
21 December 2023	Bank Interest	HSBC	Savings account interest December	196.56				122,210.01
				196.56	3,434.05	213.73	3,220.32	

GDPC - Balances - Jan 2024

	£	
HSBC Current	57,685	
HSBC Savings	122,210	
Total funds held	179,895	
<u>Allocation of Balance Sheet</u>		
Remaining budget spend (approx)	12,300	
CCTV Extension (Play areas)	9,241	
Christmas lights (inc Retail centre)	7,258	
Entry Feature King Alfred Way	4,450	
Traffic, road safety and parking		
- No verge/pavement parking		
- Double yellow lines	30,025	
- Pedestrian crossing points		
- 20mph speed limit signs		
- CPZ outside Community Hall		
GD Community Hall landlord responsibilities	10,872	
Defibrillator supplies	1,262	
Election costs	1,960	
Great Denham Youth Club	13,000	
GD History Memorial (School Project)	8,000	
Upgrade to paths in Country Park	30,000	
VAT refund due	-1,591	
General reserve	53,118	Balancing figure
Total allocation	179,895	

GREAT DENHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Financial Year 2023/24

<u>Income</u>	YTD (Actual) Gross	YTD (Actual) Net	Annual Budget 2023/24	Budget (Part year)	Variance
Precept	42,607	42,607	42,607		
VAT reclaim	1,959		1,174		
CIL Income	0	0	0		
Bank Interest	0	1,477	195		
Insurance claim					
GDCH income from DWH	3,655				
Other income		0	0		
Total Income	44,566	44,084	43,976		
<u>Outgoings</u>					
Staff costs	14,989	14,989	15,250		
Staff costs	14,989	14,989	15,250	11,991	-2,998
Christmas lights	0	0	2,500		
GDCH expenditure	6,751	6,637	3,600		
Community defib	140	117	200		
CCTV Monitoring	2,182	1,818	4,000		
CCTV Maintenance	567	473	473		
Electrics (Unmetered supply)	74	70	100		
Open spaces & community facilities	9,715	9,115	10,873	8,549	-566
Audit	453	390	375		
ICO Annual Fee	58	40	40		
Insurance	3,807	3,807	3,700		
Payroll	148	148	180		
Travel - mileage	0	18	100		
Hall hire	180	180	300		
Banking charges	72	72	96		
Information Technology	252	232	400		
Stationery	0	0	100		
Membership/Affiliations	1,005	1,005	1,031		
Training	63	63	500		
Admin - other	124	124	100		
Admin	6,161	6,078	6,922	5,443	-636
Newsletter	1,015	846	1,931		
Youth Club	0	0	6,250		
Community Events	0	0	2,000		
Other	1,015	846	10,181	8,005	7,160
GDCH Tea & Talk	645	645	0		
Grants	645	645	750	590	-55
Total Outgoings	32,525	31,673	43,976	34,578	2,905
Return Groundworks	1,818	1,818	0		
BBC Pedestrian Crossing	40,000	40,000	0		

Monthly Borough Report to GDPC December/January 2023/24

Happy New Year

Estate Management Changes

Following the push over the past year and because of my official complaint to the CEO of Barrett Developments plc FirstPort managing agents are being replaced by Hegarty Property Ltd. I have been in touch with the owners who have agreed to a meeting with me and residents representing the different schemes in Great Denham. I will be speaking to residents interested in joining this forum before agreeing on meeting dates with Hegarty. Some of the schemes that are covered by housing associations are still tied to FirstPort. I have asked Hegarty and FirstPort to list the schemes that they will be responsible for.

Bus Services Throughout Bedford

A number of services have been withdrawn over the past few months as operators report falling passenger numbers most rural services are not commercially viable and need financial support in order to keep the services running. The Borough fund services to the tune of £2m to support none commercially viable routes. The DfT gave out grants referred to as bus service improvement plans (BSIP) and whilst the other two Bedfordshire local authorities received grants (Luton £19.1m) (CBC £3.7M) BBC didn't receive any money from their bid. There is a need to refresh the BSIP bid from March this year and I will be working hard with Officers and collaboratively with Luton and CBC to put together a credible bid for enough funding to address all the shortcomings in the current service. The funding for the Number 8 service was originally from s106 monies and I am not sure if that is still the case. I will find out later this week.

Golf Course Clean-Up

Despite the thought that the Borough had gathered all the rubbish up on the golf course following quotes to Bidwell's it would appear that Bidwell's used a different contractor who as we know piled all the rubbish into a big heap on what was the 16th Fairway. This took the form of a large bonfire which of course was an invitation to set it alight. I've asked Officers to find out what action Bidwell's are likely to take given the quote we have submitted for securing the access to the golf course.



Temporary Accommodation Continues to Increase.

The Borough has seen a 41% increase in TA due to the number of people presenting as homeless. At the end of October, the Borough was providing TA for 656 households. This has meant that we spent £m's over the budgeted figures for this year and this cannot continue. Urgent action has taken place to arrest this problem, more staff have now been recruited a new management and assessment system introduced, and further funding to address the issues £500k has been made available.

- **Flooding**

Due to excessive amounts of rainfall this December period there has been an increase in flood-related incidents across the Borough.

The Council is encouraging everyone to check their journey before departure as there have been a significant number of road closures.

Residents are advised to:

- Stay out of flood water
- Don't drive through flood water
- Only ring 999 if there's a risk to life
- Roads and pavements might be blocked so check your journey before you travel.

- **Universal News**

Universal Studios have recently acquired land in Bedford for a potential park and resort – this is at the very early stages of exploring its feasibility at this time.

Much more detail is required before any final decisions are made however, the interest by Universal is positive for Bedford Borough.

This opportunity could be really transformative for the Borough and would bring in high amounts of investment through increased tourism and many high paid jobs.

The Borough Council will continue to work constructively with Universal to ensure plans align with the interests of our residents.

- **Debenhams**

The Borough Council plans to buy the former Debenhams site which forms part of the Mayor's Town Centre rejuvenation plans to create a thriving hub for the Bedford Borough community.

The Council is the preferred bidder and further plans for what the building would be used for will be released in due course.

- **Domestic Abuse Strategy consultation**

The consultation has concluded, and the information is now being collated. This information forms part of a needs assessment for Bedford Borough Council.

All this will form a part of the strategy and plans for domestic abuse services – the results from the published on the council website.

- **Local Plan 2040**

The Borough Council is in the process of evaluating its options in light of the Inspector's feedback on the Local Plan.

More information on the Council direction will be available in due course.

Wider Borough Items

- **Paula Radcliffe Way**

Work has been finished and the road has been fully reopened.

The original competition was pushed back to December 15th as crucial repairs were needed to repair the road surface, drainage system, road barriers, and bridges along Paula Radcliffe Way to keep the road safe and compliant.