



LITTLE GADDES DEN *parish council*

**MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD BY VIDEO CONFERENCE ON
18th May, 2020**

PLEASE NOTE THAT MINUTES ARE ALSO PUBLISHED ON THE VILLAGE WEB SITE
<https://littlegaddesdenpc.org.uk>

The meeting commenced at 8.00 pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs. Hyde, Lawson, Kelly, Magson, Pritchard, Saner, Townsend. Also in attendance, Alastair Greene (Clerk), County and District Councillor Terry Douris, (from 9.00pm) and seven members of the public.

APOLOGIES: None

1. FORMALITIES

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained how the meeting would be run with open microphone for Councillors and muted microphones for members of the public until the public open question session.

The first item on the agenda was the election of the Chairman to serve for the year to May 2021. The current Chairman, Councillor Paul Kelly stood unopposed and was duly elected. After the meeting he signed the Acceptance of Office and an undertaking to abide by the Code of Conduct.

The second item on the agenda was the election of the Vice Chair to serve for the year to May 2021. The current Vice Chair Councillor Kathryn Magson stood unopposed and was duly elected. After the meeting she signed the Acceptance of Office and an undertaking to abide by the Code of Conduct.

The Clerk noted the attendance and has recorded it in the register. There were no declarations of interest on items on the agenda.

The minutes of the previous month's meeting and also of last year's Annual Meeting of the Electorate were agreed as correct records of the meetings and were signed at the end of the meeting.

2. REPORTS AND MATTERS ARISING

(a) Community Support Activity in relation to Coronavirus

Cllr Kathryn Magson and Sarah Gall spoke about the need for continuous vigilance and support noting that there were both shorter and longer term impacts on people caused by the isolation. People on the call felt that the support groups were generally working very well.

(b) Update on the Shop and Post Office

Cllr. Lawson advised that the village store self-distancing arrangements were working well. People were encouraged to use and support the shop where they could.

Signed by the Chairman..... Dated.....

(c) Report from Hertfordshire Constabulary.

The Clerk presented the crime report which listed one burglary dwelling 25th March and one theft other on 22nd April. A resident mentioned that a caravan had been stolen in the village.

(d) Chairman’s Report.

The year 2019 -2020 has been an eventful year.

The year started with the first formal contested elections in living memory, where eight prospective Councilors stood for seven positions. After a nail-biting campaign of skullduggery, intrigue and the ballot box, the magnificent seven Councilors who are zooming today were elected. We welcomed two new Councilor - Sarah Lawson and Susan Pritchard and the return of the experienced Jim Townsend. This shifted the gender balance in favour of the fairer sex and probably reflecting the balance in the community. Councilor Lawson has dramatically improved our communication and Councilor Pritchard has the sensitive role of the Charities Group.

I have highlighted several projects:

We have a new Parish Council website, so please sign up as it is very useful tool to communicate with the village.

The flooding issues at Ringshall, although not perfect, seem to have improved. The cleaning of the drains has moved from annual to biannual. Consequently, the water seems to drain away after a relatively short period of time. This is an ongoing issue, which will require more attention in the coming year, but it is better.

We have had a long running project updating signage along Hudnall lane as part of the safer routes to school initiative. This has been mainly completed and we hope for further developments during this coming year.

I think the safety of the equipment in the play areas (that we can’t now use) is much better as a result of Alastair taking on the role as master inspector of equipment and getting a certificate after completing his training.

Lyn Hyde has put in a huge amount of work this year. She has spear headed the Conservation Area Character Appraisal (CACA), she as organized the village tree survey, she has recently started the Greener Gaddesden initiative and runs the planning group. Each of these requires a lot of work.

- The CACA is in first draft being reviewed my Dacorum, after receiving input from so many people in the village. It has been a fantastic effort to get the document to this stage.
- The village tree survey involves assessing each tree in the village on Parish land to ascertain if it safe and take action if required. The next batch of work is starting shortly.
- The Greener Gaddesden initiative has really just started with a goal to make village life more sustainable in light of climate change. It has already resulted in a controversial change in a major village policy...the cutting regime on the Green... with a view to protect the bees. We are in early days yet, but we are waiting with baited breath as to the feedback.

Moving onto planning. You could say that it has been an eventful year. The tone was set early in the year with the purchase of the field in Ringshall next to the blue roofed cottage and the subsequent sub-division and auction as “potential building plots”. The Parish Council was involved

Signed by the Chairman..... Dated.....

in some antagonistic enforcement issues when a developer created an entrance onto the highway and put some hardcore on the field. The situation was reversed with the help of Dacorum and the appearance of some mysterious logs.

Then we come to the most controversial planning issue of the year was the sale of the 33 acres of land of Church Road by the Mead Trust. Again, the land was subdivided and sold at auction. It has been wonderful to see the passion of the village on this subject. A lot of work has been put in by members of the community in particularly I would like to thank Stuart Stanley, Arwel Owen and George Godar. As a group, we have made any development of this land almost impossible. It is in The Conservation Area, an ANOB, has TPO's, has an Article 4 registered and according to Historic England, interferes with the setting of the Grade 1 listed Church. We still don't know the status of the land and it will be a while before it is resolved. It has been a great team effort.

And finally, our favourite District Councillor, Terry Douris, was appointed Mayor of Dacorum for the year, which requires him wearing much regalia at official functions. The great news is that this position has been extended by an additional year because of recent events. He was involved in the official event of opening the Villages new training equipment and basketball court, which has proved to be a great success, and we look forwards to inviting him back for creams teas, hopefully in the near future.

(e) Report of the Little Gaddesden Charities

CLlr Susan Pritchard read the report:-

The aim of the Charity as defined in the Charity Commissioners' "Scheme" which regulates its activities is to:-

"Relieve either generally or individually, persons resident in the Parish of Little Gaddesden who are in need, hardship or distress, by making grants of money or providing or paying for items, services or facilities calculated to redress the need, hardship or distress of such persons"

The Trustees during 2019 were:-

The Team Vicar of Little Gaddesden Church - Reverend John Russell, (Chairman)

Mrs Jane Murray

Mrs Louise Archer as representative of the Parish Council until May, then post taken over by Mrs Susan Pritchard

Mrs Pat Catchpole

Mr Michael Thompson nominated by Ashridge College
(Mrs Pat Catchpole acted as Secretary and Treasurer)

The Accounts were examined by Hillier Hopkins, Chartered Accountants of Watford. The expenditure for the year was £980

The strictest confidentiality is observed in the handling of requests for assistance and details about cases are never made public in any form. Any of the Trustees, however will be glad to answer questions of a general nature on how the charity operates.

Pat Catchpole

(f) Land for sale in Church Road

Although plots are being sold there are no details yet available from the Land Registry identifying new land owners. The Parish Council will continue to monitor and be prepared to respond to any applications for development of for the creation of access ways.

Signed by the Chairman..... Dated.....

(g) Entrance area to the Bowls Club

Cllr Townsend reminded people that a small triangular parcel of land at the entrance to the car park (adjacent to the Bowls Club) did not belong to the Parish Council. The Clerk agreed and advised that the Parish Council had a right of way over the triangle of land in order to have access at all times to the car park.

(h) To seek approval for the revised Equality Policy

The Clerk confirmed that the policy wording had been substantially updated by Cllr. Pritchard and that an appendix had been added that will enable the Council to measure its performance under the policy going forward. Cllr. Magson asked that the policy wording be properly linked to the appendix and Cllr. Pritchard undertook to complete this. It was agreed that Councillors would be given time to review the document which would be presented for approval at the next meeting.

(i) Village Hall toilet refurbishment

Cllr Kelly advised that the Village Hall had received a grant of £10,000 from Dacorum Borough Council and that together with Parish Council funds earmarked for the project, there were sufficient funds to proceed. He said that the Village Hall Management Committee (VHMC) were keen to get the project underway, especially as the hall was available due to the lockdown.

He advised that there was a significant amount of electrician’s time in relocating the electrical installation currently sited in the men’s toilets. It was proposed to install a new external cabinet to house the incoming supply and meter and have the fuse boxes mounted on the wall in the hall foyer. This work was needed as part of preparing for the future, for example possible vehicle charging points. It was also necessary he said to do all this work prior to any work on the refurbishment of the toilets. That refurbishment work was a combination of general builder work, plumbing and electrical fitting work.

The Clerk advised that over the last year or so the Village Hall Management Committee had tried to find contractors to take on the work but had found it very difficult to get anyone interested in the whole project, though they had obtained an electrical quote and a plumbing quote.

The Clerk confirmed the current Financial Authorities for letting work to contractors but also advised that if the Council chose to do so it could set aside the financial authorities if it had special reason to do so. In that situation the Council would need to agree on that approach and minute it. There was a discussion about aggregation of the work into a single project or break down of the project into specialist contractor areas.

It was agreed that the Council as part funder of the project should ensure that its financial authorities were adhered to and it was agreed that further quotes would be sought for the specialist areas of work.

(j) Cricket covers

Cllr. Kelly explained that the cricket covers that were stored on the far side of the Church Road playing field were causing the grass beneath them to die. He suggested though that rather than moving them to allow the grass to recover and potentially damaging other areas of the playing field that perhaps it was better just to leave them at one point and accept that the grass in that area will not recover. Councillors agreed with the proposal.

(k) Insurance renewal.

The Clerk sought approval to pay the insurance premium of £632.47 to cover the second year of the three-year term of the policy. He advised that the policy had been updated to cover the new

Signed by the Chairman..... Dated.....

installation of the basketball surfaced area. The request was agreed.

(I) To approve the revised Planning Enforcement policy

The Planning Enforcement Policy had been re-written and after helpful amendments from Cllr Townsend (on process) and George Godar (on emergency preparedness) the revised policy was further amended and then adopted.

3. OPEN SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Cllr. Kelly asked if anyone wished to raise any additional matters, however, questions had been permitted during the agenda items and there were no additional matters raised.

4. ADMINISTRATION

(i) Correspondence not already covered above and that requires action by the Council

The Clerk advised that a resident had complained about dog fouling on the footpath running between the Bridgewater Arms and Bede Court. The Clerk confirmed he had put up new reminder notices on that footpath saying that bags and bins were available and should be used.

Cllr Pritchard forwarded a note from a farmer who was struggling with larger vehicles to get a long the section of Hudnall Lane from the junction with Nettleden Road as far as the turn off to Chapel Close. Cllr. Kelly and the Clerk agreed to have a look at that section and County Cllr Douris agreed to seek a plan indicating the highway width at that point.

(ii) Finance

The schedule of payments was approved together with the report on expenditure for the previous month. The Clerk confirmed that the vat claim for the previous year had been met in full by HMRC.

(iii) Health and Safety

The Clerk confirmed that the Safety inspections of the play areas had taken place on 11th May. A basketball net had been added by someone to the ring and had become partially torn. Originally the ring had been supplied without a net. One of the benches had a damaged arm and the play area at Church Road was still awaiting the repair work by the Dacorum Council team. The Clerk advised he had spoken with Penny Holland re the missing notice at Cromer Close, warning people not to use the play equipment, and had replaced it and had refreshed the ones at Church Road play area also.

Finance Schedule

a. The Council approved the following payments:-

Clerk & Village Hall Manager – Salary & PAYE for **May**
 SRT Trading Limited – £220 ex vat– Warden Services (**for May**)
 MWAgri – £772 ex vat (**for May**)
 Petty Cash payment to Clerk for May (carried forward to June)
 Zurich Insurance £632.47 including taxes (no vat)
 E-on Electricity on the Green, £33.87 ex vat
 Rod Wilson Tree Surgery Ltd £560 ex vat (2nd invoice of 3)
 Talk Talk domain name and email account £37.80 inc vat

b. Cheques/payments received

LGVH Management Committee - Village Hall Manager salary

Signed by the Chairman..... Dated.....

PLANNING SCHEDULE - CURRENT APPLICATIONS (status at 18th May, 2020)
(Red text show changes since previous meeting)

SILVER BIRCHES, NETTLEDEN ROAD NORTH. RETENTION OF CHANGE OF USE OF A BARN INTO A RESIDENTIAL DWELLING, ROOF EXTENSION WITH DORMER EXTENSION. MODIFICATIONS TO OPENINGS. 4/02148/19/RET Objection by LGPC (please see wording below).

This is an application for retrospective permission for the conversion of a barn/shed into a three bedroomed dwelling. The work was started without planning permission in July 2017 and completed in January 2019.

Dacorum's core strategy for its countryside area is that there should be a limited number of new dwellings in identified small villages in Dacorum between 2006 and 2026. Little Gaddesden is not one of the identified villages. It follows therefore that permission for this new dwelling is unlikely to have been granted if permission had been applied for prior to the commencement of works and planning permission should not be granted retrospectively. Little Gaddesden Parish Council therefore objects to this application.

Still awaiting DBC decision

Manor Orchard Nettleden Road. Single Storey Front Extension and Single Storey Pavilion Garden Room Annexe to the Rear Garden Enclosure. 20/00111/FHA LGPC Objection to the additional annex/garden room but no objection to the extension of the dwelling.

Following a further review by the Planning Working Group and a meeting with the applicant and a discussion with the between the Clerk and the Planning Officer James Gardner, the Planning Working Group now wish to amend the Parish Council's response to read as follows:-

LGPC would be happy to withdraw the objection to the application completely, provided that there is a condition imposed that the annex/garden room building has to be used as ancillary to the main dwelling and not as a separate dwelling. **Granted by DBC with the following condition:- The garden room / granny annexe hereby permitted shall not be occupied at any time other than for purposes ancillary to the residential use of the dwelling known as Manor Orchard and shall not be independently occupied.**

Reason: For the avoidance of doubt and to ensure that the use of the development remains ancillary to the use of the main dwelling house without allowing the intensification of residential accommodation within the site in accordance with Policies CS1, CS2 and CS7 of the Core Strategy.

Mosshall Farm, Nettleden Road North. Construction of stables for personal use. 20/00453/FUL. Objection by LGPC as follows:- Little Gaddesden Parish Council (LGPC) objects to the application, but is prepared to withdraw the objection if the applicant will confirm that the track shown on the location map is not part of the development for which permission is sought. Further LGPC asks that 'Permitted Development Rights' be withdrawn on this property owing to the development that has taken place there from the original 4/02699/15/ful and following 4/00614/17/roc applications.

We would also like to draw your attention to the high bank (approx. 2 metres) that has appeared for the entire length on the inside of the roadside hedge of the property since work started in 2017 – is this perhaps a matter for Enforcement? LGPC would request that as soon as is possible under the current circumstances, a site visit takes place to resolve these matters.

Signed by the Chairman..... Dated.....

Awaiting DBC decision

Birchwood, Golf Club Road. Demolition of existing single storey extension and timber balcony to facilitate the construction of a replacement 2-storey extension and re-cladding of the external walls. Replacement of all windows and doors, construction of new rooflight, alterations to the existing driveway and new vehicular access. 20/00796/FHA

Supported by LGPC, awaiting DBC decision

Hudnall Field Centre, Hudnall Common – Temporary camping facilities.

Not referred to Parish Council but Hudnall residents group responded not objecting.

DBC decision Raise no objection

After the public had had an opportunity to comment on the applications below, the Planning Working Group made their recommendations to the full Parish Council.

2 Little Gaddesden House, Nettleden Road. Replacement of existing windows at front and rear of property. 20/01012/LBC & 20/01011/FHA **No objection from LGPC, awaiting DBC decision**

60 Nettleden Road North. Construction of a Bin Store / Garden Store with timber cladding and mono pitched roof with roof tiles to match existing house. 20/01067/FHA **No objection from LGPC, awaiting DBC decision**

49 Little Gaddesden. Replacement of metal windows to the 1930 front extension of cottage with wooden framed windows. 20/01066/LBC **No objection from LGPC, awaiting DBC decision**

Hudnall House, Hudnall Lane. Demolition of Shed/Store buildings and construction of new link between house and garage. 20/01113/FHA **No objection from LGPC, awaiting DBC decision**

1 The Red House Nettleden Road North. Replacement of 3 existing windows to the Nettleden Road elevation at 1st floor level with new hardwood timber windows. The new windows will identically match the existing windows. Existing window furniture will be re-used where possible. 20/00997/LBC **No objection from LGPC, awaiting DBC decision**

5, Little Gaddesden House. Proposal: Variation of condition 2 (approved plans) attached to planning permission 4/01810/19/FHA - Rear single storey extension. 20/01134/ROC **No objection from LGPC, awaiting DBC decision**

Information to share / Items for the next meeting

The Clerk thanked Piers Lawson for setting up the last few online video meetings. Although the current situation was expected to be temporary the Clerk asked whether the Council wished to take up its own Zoom license at c. £12 per month to cover future meeting. The Council agreed to the expenditure.

The meeting closed at **10.00pm.**

The next meeting is on **Monday 15th June, 2020.**

Signed by the Chairman..... Dated.....