



LITTLE GADDES DEN *parish council*

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE SPORTS PAVILION AND BY VIDEO CONFERENCE ON

21st June, 2021

PLEASE NOTE THAT MINUTES ARE ALSO PUBLISHED ON THE WEB SITE

<https://littlegaddesdenpc.org.uk>

The meeting commenced at 8.00 pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs Hyde, Kelly, Magson, Saner, Townsend & Thompson. Also in attendance, Alastair Greene (Clerk), County and District Councillor Terry Douris and by video twelve members of the public.

APOLOGIES: Cllrs. Fruish

1. FORMALITIES

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained how the meeting would be run.

The Clerk noted the attendance and recorded it in the register.

The minutes of the previous month's meeting were agreed as a correct record of the meeting and were signed at the end of the meeting.

2. OPEN SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

Cllr. Kelly asked if anyone wished to raise any matters not already covered in the agenda.

Jon Mole, Assistant Scout Leader, 1st Little Gaddesden Scouts, had written to the Parish Council re camping on the Church Road playing fields and followed up his request verbally at the meeting. 'The Chief Commissioner of Scouts for England has announced that we can camp (with various restrictions) from 21 June. We would therefore like to camp for one night on Friday 9 July. We wondered if we could have permission to camp in the Playing Field (in the corner by the play equipment – to be as far from houses as possible). We are currently a small group - 2 Leaders, 10 Scouts and 1 Junior Leader. We would be out the way of any football or other activities on Saturday morning – as I imagine we would be getting up fairly early! We would do all the cooking etc in the grounds of the Scout Hut, so there would be no fire or cooking etc in the field – just tents. Again, toilet facilities would be the one in the Scout hut.'

The Council agreed to the request but also decided that it would be helpful to have a policy about such requests to use the Parish Council's land. Cllr Thompson volunteered to assist with this.

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

3. REPORTS AND MATTERS ARISING

(a) Report from Hertfordshire Constabulary.

PCSO Lee Clements had advised the Clerk that the only reported crimes were as follows:-

- 1 x criminal damage
- 1 x damage to a property
- 1 x theft (other)
- 1 x theft of Royal mail post

(b) To confirm action taken in relation to the application for a revised alcohol licence by Ashridge (EF Corporate Education)

Cllr Kelly welcomed two members of the staff from Ashridge, Morten Davidsen (VP of Operations) and David Willmin (Hospitality & Events Director). The following paragraphs summarise the discussion and were sent to Ashridge following the meeting for a confirmation of our understanding.

Hi Morten and David

Thank you very much for joining the Parish Meeting on Monday night and providing the background to your Entertainment Licence application. I think many of the points you made have reassured the Parish Councillors and those attending the meeting, though we will share the information you provided with those who could not attend. We are not experts on licencing, so it was helpful that you explained that following deregulation of the licensing laws in 2015 many of the activities that you currently run do not require a formal licence.

The purpose of this note is to record the Parish Council's understanding from the discussion and to place on record the context in which the licence is being made. Your confirmation of our understanding will allow us to modify our initial response to the consultation, which we had to make within the strict timetable of the Licencing Act and ahead of the opportunity to discuss this with you.

I think Morton you said that we should reflect on our experience, certainly over the period you have been in office c. 18 months and maybe further back to understand what activities are likely to be carried out in the future.

In your introduction Morton you said that there is no change to your core business model which is to remain a first-class educational institution. You are currently ranked in the Top 20 of business schools and your constant thought and desire is to find ways of retaining and improving your position in the ranking.

Ashridge buildings are expensive to maintain and yet at the moment you are unable to utilise the full extent of the buildings. You are working with Conservation Officers from Dacorum BC and have an inspection planned next week in order to present some planned internal changes to bring some areas into use and make efficient/profitable use of others.

The main drivers for the licence application are:-

1. *the wish to have total flexibility on how you use the building and gardens in relation to the licence,*
2. *to adjust to current demands/expectations from your clients,*
3. *to avoid the administration of temporary individual licence applications for events,*
4. *to seek income to help defray the costs of maintenance of the roads and buildings.*

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

Not all rooms have the benefit of the licence and for future flexibility, when students return in numbers to the building, it would make management of people in covid times and beyond easier if all rooms were licenced. It would enable you to avoid excessive movement of students and keep groups of students in effect safely isolated.

Often in a stay of a few days, students like to have time off campus though you hope through provision of appropriate services to keep them on site and maximise spend at Ashridge rather than at external locations.

You set out your planned activities as follows:-

Weddings will continue

The Courtyard Café has been set up and advertised locally but you don't want Ashridge to become a destination as such.

You are experimenting with Open Air Cinema but only plan 8 screenings this summer

You have restaurant evenings on the south terrace, these may be accompanied by amplified music but amplified music only means music being played through a speaker it does not mean loud music, volume will be appropriate for the event and disturbance to neighbours avoided.

You had meals inside globes/capsules as a dining experiment

Due to conservation work in the main gardens, you are temporarily having some of your team building activities on the front lawns, these may involve alcohol.

On your Charitable activities you continue to support use of the playing fields in front of the house for local football and cricket teams and have the Hospice Mud lark challenge.

Councillors of course appreciate that you support these activities and note that the mud lark can bring in substantial income for the Hospice but concern was expressed by the Council that the use of the tannoy could be heard all over the village and it would be very much appreciated if the commentary can be provided in a manner which does not disturb the whole village.

You held a rock artist exhibition! But you have no plans to hold rock concerts!

The Chairman Paul Kelly asked for questions from other participants at the meeting. One particular request, which we believe you agreed to was not to seek an extension of hours to provide alcohol between 8am to 9am.

The Chairman was pleased that you took the time to join us at the meeting and made it clear in concluding the session that the Parish Council wishes Ashridge to be successful and profitable and to continue to support the village and carry out its Charitable deeds and at the same time avoid activities that might upset the neighbours. Might some conditioning about decibel levels be appropriate?

It would be helpful if you could acknowledge receipt of this email and confirm that our understanding above is correct and that where you plan to do something permitted under the licence but that may impact locally on village residents, you let us know and minimise the impact through carrying out a noise impact assessment. For our part if we receive complaints, we will share with you.

The other thing to say is that from time to time we have spoken with you and your colleagues, it would be great to continue that dialogue. Cllr Townsend is tasked with that liaison responsibility with Ashridge but in his absence the Chair or the Clerk are always happy to help too.

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

As the Licence hearing is scheduled for 6th July and submissions need to be submitted 7 working days prior, i.e. Thursday 24th, we need a very quick response from you.

(c) Action taken regarding plastic in top dressing of field between Hudnall and the Church.

Cllr Hyde explained that the farmer of the fields between Hudnall Lane/Grovels and the Church had been top dressing those fields with material, that although from a licenced provider, contained an unacceptable volume of shredded plastic bags, bottle tops utensils etc. and many villagers walking the footpaths across and at the edges of the fields had been distressed by the scene and complained to the Parish Council.

The matter was reported to the Environment Agency who conducted an investigation and contacted the farmer. The investigation continued with the Licencing Authority reviewing the supplier of the material and planning an unannounced inspection.

Meanwhile, the fields remain covered in plastic, so at the request of the Parish Council, family, friends, relatives and residents have kindly volunteered to help with a litter pick every Wednesday evening in June. So far at least one possibly two large wheelie bins of small plastic pieces have been collected and disposed of properly. The Parish Council intend to wrap this matter up by writing to the farmer advising him of the action taken by the village in clearing it up and asking him to take very special care in the material he orders in future.

(d) To consider what response would be appropriate to the consultation by the Boundary Commission regarding the Constituency Boundaries

Cllr Kelly suggested that consideration be given to this matter though it was acknowledged that responses need to be made by 2nd Aug (same date as the next Parish Meeting).

(e) To consider maintenance options for the footpath running between Hudnall Common and Home Farm

It was agreed that this footpath has deteriorated badly over the last few years and could do with some new granite chip surfacing. Cllr Kelly suggested that a small working party should have a look at it prior to the next meeting and make a recommendation about how to proceed.

(f) To seek approval to the metal fencing to protect the young cypress trees on land adjacent to the Lady Marian Memorial

Cllr Hyde sought approval for the expenditure of £900 to cover the cost of installing a National Trust 'estate' style fencing to protect the trees adjacent to the memorial. Councillors agreed and the Clerk was asked to instruct Howson to proceed.

(g) Councillor responsibilities

The final version of Councillor responsibilities was agreed and the Clerk was asked to update the web site accordingly.

(h) Drivesafe statistics

Cllr Hyde presented the latest statistics:-

May Statistics: Deer Leap to Beaney Corner

Number of cars passing into the village: 282

Only 50 of them exceeding 36 mph – which is 18% - down from the usual 25%.

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

Thanks to Anthony Archer and Jim Townsend who will both be standing down as a Lead Volunteers this month. Anthony has shouldered the burden of organising teams and the liaison with the Police and he will be sorely missed by the two remaining Leads George Godar & myself. In that there has to be a Lead Volunteer present throughout the roadside sessions we are in great need of at least one if not two more Leads who are prepared to put in a bit more time than the hour and a half a month we do at the roadside. I would be very pleased to explain the additional responsibilities to any volunteer.

(I) To propose how to manage the encroaching hedges on Hudnall Lane (The Green end)

Cllr Kelly explained that he had received complaints from residents about the narrow section of road near the junction between Hudnall Lane and Nettleden Road. One person in particular had lost a mirror due to the hedges that are encroaching on the roads. It was agreed that the residents were responsible for maintaining their hedges and should be encouraged to do that, though there was also discussion about a contractor being employed to cut the hedges back with the idea being to then re-charge the residents whose hedges were encroaching. As a first step, County Cllr Douris offered to establish the true boundary of the road so that residents could be asked to cut back to that officially approved line.

(j) To discuss the quotes received for the roundabout resurfacing at Church Road playing fields

The Clerk presented quotes for the provision of a new wet pour surface material to replace the sunken and worn rubber matting around the roundabout. It was agreed that the Clerk should accept the quote from Kompan for £4,718 ex vat for green coloured surface area 4.5 metres in diameter.

Quotes from Caloo and PlayInnovation were to be declined.

Cllr Hyde reminded Councillors that there had been correspondence re additional surfacing/playground improvements from Katie Margetts as follows:-

In regards to the playground, the community, especially village parents and school /preschool parents would be eager to enhance the playground. An example would be Wigginton playground in Tring that was entirely community funded and fits in well with the conservation area. Perhaps this is worth discussion and consideration. In regards to funding and improving the play area I would be happy to help organise a crowd funding page for this, if an improvement plan and quote was to be devised.

Cllr Kelly thanked Katie and friends for the offer of help and the Clerk undertook to speak to the Clerk at Wigginton to find out the background to the funding etc. wit the intention of bringing this forward to a future meeting.

4. ADMINISTRATION

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

Received from Katie Rogers.

'Hi, In the previous PC meeting and previous correspondence over the last few months I discussed concerns over safety of the speed of cars on Church Road. While it has been made clear the speed limit of 30mph is under discussion with DBC. Can you confirm if there has been any advances on road floor markings and signage to improve the safety to the children in the village using this road daily? There are no clear signs stating that there is school/preschool/sports field and a serious lack of road safety signs for encouraging drivers to drive slowly and be more vigilant (as it's outside the school and the preschool). Every day that passes without these basic road safety needs poses a risk to someone's child.

In addition to church road. I have noticed the playground surface area exposed down to the original flooring which is hard exposed and have seen nails and other debris in it. The recent

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

meeting discussed new flooring surrounding the round about will this be the case for all the equipment? Recently an adult playing football in the same field fell and due to how hard the ground is, had a serious concussion resulting in a brain bleed. This is proof that the playground floor is not suitable for children who of course have much softer skulls than adults. Perhaps the village could raise funds or do a just giving fund raiser for this as I know many parents would be eager to contribute. Local parks in surrounding areas such as Pitstone and Ivinghoe have a much safer design. Thank you for reading and I look forward to hearing back from you. Katie Rogers.

As a result of the above correspondence Cllr Hyde had sent Katie Rogers an update on the speeding issues, which remain open for discussion with HCC.

Play area improvements were discussed during the meeting. (item (j) above).

David and Margaret Nowell-Withers both wrote to complain about the ineffectiveness of the four gulleys outside Gatesdene Close. The Clerk confirmed he had reported them all to HCC. County Cllr Douris said that the gulleys appeared to be clear.

Cllr Thompson noted the gulleys outside Beaney were similarly failing the cope with the rainfall.

Phil Heaphy asked in correspondence if Gaddesden Society could hold the Sports Day on 11th September, there were no objections so the Clerk had written back confirming.

Claire Owen asked whether the Gaddesden Gallop event could be advertised on the fence opposite the Village Hall. The Clerk had given approval to Claire.

(ii) Finance

- (a) The schedule of payments was approved together with the report on expenditure for the previous month.
- (b) The Internal Audit Report was presented by the Clerk with no issues being raised.
- (c) Section 1 of the AGAR, The Annual Governance Statement 2020/21 was approved.
- (d) Section 2 of the AGAR, The Accounting Statements 2020/21 was then approved
- (e) It was confirmed that the dates for the Period of exercise of Public rights would be 22nd June to 3rd August and that all AGAR documentation would be available on the Parish Council web site by 26th June.

(iii) Health and Safety

The Clerk confirmed that the monthly H&S inspection had been carried out on the Play Areas on 1st June. All was as expected apart from a metal hinge to a bin lid that was sticking out at a dangerous angle and height. The Clerk advised that he had repaired it straightaway.

5. COUNCILLOR UPDATE

Cllr Magson reminded the Council about the strip of highway verge in the Ringshall dip. It was agreed that a site visit should be carried out to determine what work of improvement needed to be carried out here. The safety of people waiting for the bus being one issue and the general untidiness of the verge being the other.

FINANCE SCHEDULE

a. Cheques for approval. The Council approved the following:-

Clerk & Village Hall Manager – Salary & PAYE for **June**

SRT Trading Limited – £220 ex vat– Warden Services for **June**

MWAgri – £692 ex vat for **June**. Also, MWAgri Step repair on path between Bridgewater Arms and Ringshall Drive March invoice included payment of £85 ex vat not reported in March

Petty Cash payment to Clerk for **June** £186.01 inc vat (includes zoom renewal at £106.82 inc vat)

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

Scottish Power £12.27 inc vat per month direct debit
Town and Parish Council web sites Web site hosting annual charge, £240 (no vat)

b. Cheques/payments received
LGVH Management Committee - Village Hall Manager salary
£10 received from Scouts for rent due 1st April 2021 and 1st April 2022

PLANNING SCHEDULE - CURRENT APPLICATIONS (status at 21st June, 2021)

Applications received since the last meeting.

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.

42 Nettleden Road North. To strip off existing roof tiling, provide breathable membrane batten and retile with Redland plain clay tiles 21/01874/FHA & 21/01875/LBC **Supported by LGPC**

Little Gaddesden House. Nettleden Road. Works to trees. 21/02098/TCA **Supported by LGPC**

1 Hudnall Lane. Non material amendment to plans already approved (Omission of 2 roof lights & large feature window in gable wall. Instead, new side window, smaller gable window and larger en-suite window are proposed). 21/02126/NMA **Supported by LGPC**

5 Church Road. New Porch, Dormer Window on Rear Elevation at Second Floor Level and internal reconfigurations. 21/02352/FHA **It was agreed that a meeting with the applicant would be helpful and was arranged for later that week.**

For applications below LGPC has already submitted its consultation response.
(Red text show changes since previous meeting)

5 Church Road, Demolition of existing garage and single storey rear extension. 21/01496/FHA
Little Gaddesden Parish Council objects to the proposed single storey extension on grounds of depth and height. The scheme is not in keeping with its neighbours. A rear extension with a consistent rear building line, and similar height would be more in keeping. The other half of the semi-detached dwelling was extended relatively recently to a depth of 4 metres on pre-planning advice and it would seem sensible and fair to preserve consistency in the rearward building line of this set of three semi-detached homes called Coronation Villas. An extension which is consistent with the rear building line would be more appropriate. The extension to no.6 (other half of the semi) is 2 metres tall. The height of the proposed extension to no.5, including its parapet, is 3.3 metres and will therefore dominate its neighbour, being more than a metre taller (and extending for a depth of 1 metre beyond the back of no.6). The effect of the extension will be to overbear the garden and rear of no.6. None of the other 3 pairs of semi-detached houses has a parapet roof design which adds unnecessary height. The excessive height will cause overshadowing and loss of light to its neighbour. Awaiting DBC Decision

Laurel Bank Nettleden Road. Single storey front extension and replacement porch canopy 21/01586/FHA. Little Gaddesden Parish Council objected to the previous application 20/03313/FHA as follows:- The demolition of the wall fronting the road is strongly opposed. Laurel Bank, No.1 Home Farm Cottages is in the Little Gaddesden Conservation Area and part of the original Home Farm Complex. The wall is well over a hundred and fifty years old, its demolition

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

will detract from the distinctive character, appearance and historic environment of Little Gaddesden. The new application still proposes to remove the original wall, arch and gate, the Parish Council objects strongly to the proposal for the same reasons as previously. **Refused by DBC**

Kilbracken Hudnall Common. Proposed carport. 21/01620/FHA

Little Gaddesden Parish Council objected to the previous application 4/03077/18/FHA on the grounds that it was contrary to Policy CS7 of the Dacorum Core Strategy for the following reasons.

1. The proposal significantly increases the built development between the house and the property boundary.
2. The proposed building is (at above 4m) too high for a building within 2m of the property boundary.
3. The roof line at the sides and rear of the building comes down to 0.9m from the ground and has a significant visual impact.

For these reasons the Parish Council believes that the development has a significant impact on the openness and rural appearance of the countryside in breach of Policy CS7. Despite the fact that Dacorum BC granted this application, the Parish Council considers that due to the bulk and appearance and the height being a further 1.4m more than the previous application it should be refused. **Withdrawn by the applicant**

Hudnall Park House, Field Study Centre, Hudnall Common. Erection of an electronically operated automatic swing gate and solar power system. HERTS CC

The Parish Council does not object to this application. **No objection by DBC**

Cedar House, Nettleden Road. Construction of gate and flanking walls 21/01060/FHA

Little Gaddesden Parish Council objects to this application. The Chiltern Design Guide recommends entrance gates should be simple and visibly permeable the PC would prefer to see a more traditional farm gate style as installed next door at Deer Leap Manor.

The brick flanking walls do not conform to the Chiltern Design Guide and are considered a suburbanising feature. LGPC would prefer to see wooden gate posts. The gates opposite at The Oak House are similar, however Cedar House entrance is different to Oak House. There it could be argued that the wall matches and offsets the house. With Cedar House there is no house visible, so the wall has nothing to offset or match. It is just an ostentatious feature leading nowhere and would look very out of place. Even Deer Leap Manor doesn't have a wall. The Chiltern Design Guide recommends concrete kerbs are avoided. Boundary hedging should be locally common, and locally sourced native species are preferred...avoid fast growing exotic species, especially cypress and LAUREL; "Great weight should be given to conserving and enhancing landscapes and scenic beauty" (LPC have objected to brick piers to Torwood 19/02546/fha).

Note that the owner of Cedar Lodge attended the Parish meeting and felt that the objection from LGPC was unreasonable and it was agreed that a site meeting would take place. That meeting has taken place and the Parish Council have agreed to amended drawings submitted by the applicant.

4 Nettleden Road North. Infill extension into the existing courtyard, replacement of existing uPVC fenestration for white painted timber frame casement windows, other minor changes to the fenestration to the rear elevation and associated internal works. 21/01345/FHA

Supported by LGPC, **Granted by DBC**

Peacocks Wood Nettleden Road. Replacement detached house & integral garages. 21/00486/FUL

LGPC supports the application with this proviso. It is noted that whilst gates appear on the application, no design is shown. In line with LGPC responses to 19/02546/FHA & 20/02145/FHA Torwood which is next door but one, for their gates the Chiltern Design Guide states: In rural areas

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

the entrances and boundaries should be simple and permeable; preferably with an open entrance or a 5 bar wooden gates with hedgerow boundary. Brick pillars and solid gates are not characteristic, give a suburban feel and should be avoided. **Granted by DBC**

Robin Hood Farm Nettleden Road North. Demolition of existing building. Construction of new agricultural office building. 20/03316/FUL Supported by LGPC, **Decision awaited from DBC.**

The meeting closed at **10.30pm.**

The next meeting is on **Monday 2nd August, 2021 in person at the Village Hall.**

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