

LITTLE GADDES DEN *parish council*

~~DRAFT~~ MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD AT THE VILLAGE HALL ON

April 17th, 2023

PLEASE NOTE THAT MINUTES ARE ALSO PUBLISHED ON THE WEB SITE

<https://littlegaddesdenpc.org.uk>

The meeting commenced at 7.30 pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs. Hyde, Kelly, Magson, Saner, Thompson & Townsend. Also in attendance, the Clerk, County and Borough Councillor Terry Douris and twelve members of the public.

APOLOGIES: There were no apologies

1. FORMALITIES

The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting and explained how the meeting would be run and that it was the last meeting of the current Council and there were formalities to be attended to.

The attendance of Councillors was noted and recorded in the register.

Approval of the Minutes. The Minutes were agreed as a correct record of the meeting and were signed at the end of the meeting.

There were no declarations of interest.

2. OPEN SESSION FOR MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

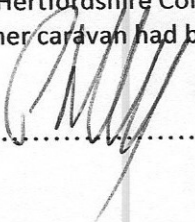
Cllr. Kelly asked if anyone wished to raise any matters not already covered in the agenda.

- A member of the public noted that Ashridge House were holding a Ball on 15 May with fireworks and wished LGPC to raise residents concerns regarding the impact to wildlife particularly the fawns who are birthing at this time, the impact on the environment from smoke, rubbish from the fireworks and noise. He was aware of the serious impact on 2 horses from fireworks. The resident maintained the fireworks were completely unnecessary at any time and particularly now and asked that LGPC took action in this respect, fireworks were anti-social and outdated. The resident asked how LGPC had progressed with Ashridge regarding the cessation of fireworks. The Chair agreed that this would be raised with Ashridge again. **Action: Clerk Cllr Townsend to liaise with Ashridge**
- A member of the public raised concerns about the increase in parking on the Green and on the land opposite the Green following the work by the NT to clear the verge. Several cars had parked there. Cllr Townsend confirmed that the NT had no intention of putting logs there.

3. REPORTS AND MATTERS ARISING

(a) To receive a report from Hertfordshire Constabulary.

There was no one present from Hertfordshire Constabulary, and no statistics had been provided, however, a resident noted that her caravan had been stolen and another resident stated that horses

Signed by the Chairman.......... Dated..... 15/ MAY/23

had been let loose and that it was apparently not a crime.

(b) To discussed the current enforcement issues at Church Road

The meeting was informed that:

- The impact of the van opposite the Church and the of the escaped animals including eating floral tributes in the cemetery and local crops had been raised at the highest level with DBC and discussions were ongoing. It was noted that costs were being sought by DBC in connection with both the Appeal and the Enforcement.
- Borough Cllr Terry Douris was thanked for his interventions and support in this regard.
- A resident noted that it felt like the community was being subjected to co-ordinated intimidation and that despite many reports from the community to the authorities residents' experience was that there was a lack of support from the people who should be protecting and assisting the community.
- Cllr Douris emphasised that all cases of anti-social behaviour should be reported to the police immediately. Cllr Douris noted a positive response from the police in respect of his own reports and reiterated that reports should be made to the police and crime numbers obtained AND after the event it should also be reported on DBC website. Cllr Douris noted that there may be a disconnect in the Police reporting process, hence the importance of following through on the website. He noted residents concerns that the van, anti-social behaviour and planning issues needed to be resolved.

(c) To review the professional advice received and agree next steps regarding the insurance of the village hall, car parks, playgrounds – Cllr Magson

Cllr Magson updated the meeting regarding her conversation with the Secretary to the Village Hall Committee. She noted:

- The indepth knowledge and understanding of the Secretary and the lack of understanding by LGPC of the complexities of the situation.
- that she and the Secretary had explored several options.
- It was agreed that LGPC should take its own advice and that the Clerk would contact HAPTC or similar for initial advice
- LGPC needed to clarify if the Village Hall should be on LGPC asset register and if so at what value; LGPC needed to better understand its status as Custodian Trustee so that it had fulfilled its obligations and due diligence in this regard in respect of its status.

It was agreed that LGPC would have sight of the policy as part of its due diligence and that given the immediacy of the insurance renewals that these would go ahead as usual. **Action: Clerk & Chair**

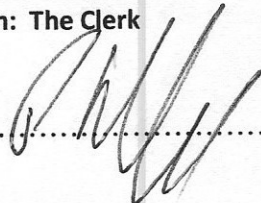
It was noted that the insurers would not assist with appropriate wording for the car park or playground and that Cllr Saner had obtained advice from a legal forum which would be considered for adoption by the new Council. **Action: Clerk to liaise with other Clerks and prepare options for next Council**

(d) To discuss and agree final arrangements for celebration of the Coronation of King Charles III

Penny Holland updated the meeting on progress including

- An extension to the marquee to accommodate up to 250 attendees.
- Numbers for the Saturday evening were based on ticket sales as attendance would have to be restricted for safety reasons. Sales was helping with plans for food.
- Help was needed on Friday during the day to set up, parishioners asked for their assistance.
- The Clerk was liaising with the Friends of the School regarding insurance cover and awaiting an update. LGPC confirmed that they would underwrite the extension and additional insurance costs as necessary. **Action: The Clerk**

Signed by the Chairman.....



Dated.....

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(e) To agree the year end documentation and preliminary report from the internal auditor

The Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer reported that

- the Internal Audit had been carried out and the Annual Internal Audit Report 2022/23 had been signed off by the Auditor and a report received.
- all the documentation required in the Annual Governance and Accountability Return pack for 2022/23 had been forwarded to the Cllrs for consideration, review, approval and signature. The pack included bank reconciliations and explanations of variances. The Responsible Financial Officer signed the declaration on Section 2 of the Accounting Statements before presenting this and all associated documentation to the Cllrs for agreement in hard copy at the meeting.

The Cllrs agreed that they had considered, reviewed and approved the documentation and **Section 1** the Annual Governance Statement was duly signed off by the Chair and Clerk, **and Section 2** was therefore signed off by the Chair noting this would be recorded and minuted **in 3 (e) of the Minutes for the meeting.**

Cllrs agreed that the Clerk may forward the year end return documentation to the external auditors to review. **Action:** Clerk

The Cllrs agreed that the Clerk may publish the approved sections of the Annual Governance Review, the completed statement of Public Rights and Publication of Unaudited Annual Governance & Accountability Return, and the notes which accompany the Notice on the Parish Council's website from 5th June to 14th July 2022. **Action:** Clerk

(f) To discuss and agree on the next steps regarding the ownership, protection and insurance of the village archives – Cllr Hyde

The meeting was informed that:

- The working party had concluded that the archive contents could not be insured as they were irreplaceable, it was therefore important that it was as fireproof as possible.
- 24 linear meters of shelving was required, the depth of shelves to be determined.
- Large numbers of Suitably sized boxes which could be safely lifted and moved around were required
- A work space and plan area was desirable.
- A resident offered to assist in the procurement of shelving, plan drawers (doubling as a work space) and boxes. This help was much appreciated. **Action:** Clerk to provide contact details and Cllr Hyde to contact the resident.

(g) To update on Greener Gaddesden - Cllr Magson

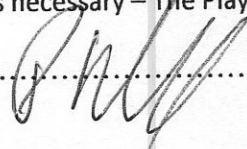
It was noted that

- this initiative was a community one and that LGPC was represented in the group by Cllr Magson.
- Cllr Magson was not going forward as a Cllr in the new term, whilst she was happy to continue to participate in the group in a personal capacity
- LGPC would need to nominate a replacement Cllr.

Action: Clerk & Chair appropriation of duties

(h) To agree the following governance documents and policies:

- a. The Planning & Consultation Policy
- b. The Complaints Procedure
- c. The Training & Development Policy
- d. The Advertising in the Village Policy
- e. Other policies as necessary – The Playground/Play Areas Risk Management Policy

Signed by the Chairman.....  Dated..... 15 / MAY / 23

The Council agreed the above policies and that these would be regularly reviewed each year on a rolling basis throughout the year to spread the review load.

(I) To update on the Recruitment of the Clerk and to agree next steps

The meeting was informed that the role had been advertised and that no one other than the temporary Clerk had applied. The Council therefore agreed the appointment of Vicki Fruish to the role of Clerk and were in the process of completing the contractual documentation.

(j) To update on Parish Council Elections and next steps

It was noted that:

- 5 people had completed nomination forms to become Councillors for the coming Term. 3 of whom were existing Cllrs: Lyn Hyde, Jim Townsend and Paul Kelly and two were new Cllrs, Paul Hartwell and Buchan Scott.
- The Council were delighted to confirm that there would not be an election and that they were now seeking to co-opt another 2 councillors to fill the 7 seats. Attendees were asked to consider and encourage others to contact LGPC to explore how they could help.
- The contribution of many villagers who supported LGPC from time to time with their expertise was acknowledged and appreciated.

(k) To formally thank the Council for their work, to thank those who are retiring and to thank those who have put themselves forward.

The Chair and two members of the public each thanked the Council and Terry Douris for all their hard work and service to the Parish.

4. ADMINISTRATION

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

There was none.

(ii) Finance The schedule of payments was approved together with the report on expenditure for the previous month.

FINANCE SCHEDULE

a. Cheques /payments for approval. The Council agreed the following payments:-

The Council to note that the following payments had been made since the last meeting

Cheques/payments received

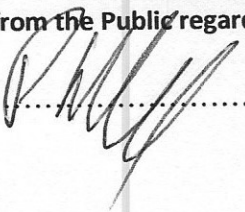
*** Pre agreed contractual payments**

(iii) Health and Safety – the Chair reported that DBC had kindly agreed to assist with repairs to some playground items and that there was a delay in obtaining materials. The Chair was liaising with DBC to expedite this.

(iv) Planning Schedule

To seek any responses from the Public regarding the applications received since last

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meeting. To agree the wording of the consultation responses to DBC for the applications. See attached Planning Schedule and Enforcement Summary for details of decisions made. Where there was a significant discussion additional information is provided below.

5. COUNCILLOR UPDATE

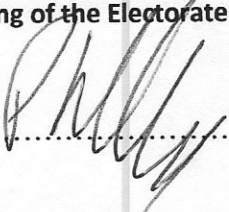
Items raised are for discussion only, no resolutions can be made on items that did not form part of the agenda but new matters can by agreement of the Council be added to the agenda of the next Parish meeting

- Concern was shared about erosion of the Green and expansion of driveways on the Village Green caused by parking. LGPC to consider how best to protect the Green to halt this given the access challenges for mowing and maintenance.
- Cllr Magson noted that LGPC would need to nominate a Cllr to attend the Little Gaddesden Charities Committee.
- The Chair noted that the new Council would need to review responsibility areas and appoint Cllrs to areas including Planning, Charities, School liaison and the Greener Gaddesden, he and the Clerk would check the responsibility list with Cllrs going forward.
- The cost of SIDS was noted and that some villages appeared to have smaller SIDS and it was suggested that this be explored. Cllr Thompson noted that she hadn't had any response to her emails on SIDS.
- David Brattle updated the meeting that the costs of the various solutions to the roof were significantly higher than expected and that the Village Hall were exploring options. Borough Cllr Terry Douris encouraged the Village Hall to explore all grant funding avenues. David Brattle wondered if an increase in precept might be appropriate and or looking into interest free loans from DBC.
- Cllr Hyde thanked David Brattle for carrying out repairs.
- The Clerk noted the contribution and support provided by Jane Tilley in preparing the Year End and in simplifying financial processes going forward.
- Cllr Douris endorsed the vote of thanks to the Council and the Cllrs not going forward into the new term. He also reminded the meeting that formal identification was required to vote and that the voting stations would be manned by different officials on this occasion.

There were no other comments.

The meeting closed at c21.00

The next meeting is the Annual meeting of the Parish Council on Monday 15th May, 2023 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall
(preceded by the Annual Meeting of the Electorate at 7.00pm)

Signed by the Chairman.......... Dated.....15/MAY/23