

MINUTES of the Annual Meeting of GREAT PAXTON PARISH COUNCIL held on Monday 23rd May 2016 at Great Paxton School, Mount Pleasant, Great Paxton.

PRESENT: Councillors Mrs J Addison, G R Addison, D Beattie, W Bond, P Goodyer, S Peters and R Widdowson.

IN ATTENDANCE: County Councillor J Wisson, District Councillors Mrs B E Boddington and R J West and four Members of the public.

1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs J Peters, duly seconded by Councillor P Goodyer and

RESOLVED

that Councillor W Bond be elected Chairman of the Parish Council for the ensuing year.

(Councillor Bond signed the Statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office.)

2. APPOINTMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN

It was proposed by Councillor Mrs J Peters, duly seconded by the Chairman, Councillor W Bond and

RESOLVED

that Councillor Mrs J Addison be appointed Vice-Chairman of the Parish Council for the ensuing year.

(Councillor Mrs Addison signed the Statutory Declaration of Acceptance of Office.)

3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All Councillors were present and there were no declarations of interests nor requests for dispensation.

4. COMMENTS AND OBSERVATIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC & DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

District Councillors Mrs B E Boddington and R J West

District Councillor Mrs Boddington reminded the meeting that Councillor Jason Ablewhite, former Leader of Huntingdonshire had recently been elected Police & Crime Commissioner for a 4 year term. The Parish Council understood that one of his early objectives would be to look at the potential for amalgamating the Fire and Police Authorities as a way to reduce expenditure.

Councillor West congratulated both the Chairman and Vice Chairman on their re-election, commended the work of the Parish Council and looked forward to contributing to future meetings on a more regular basis.

On a similar theme, County Councillor Julie Wisson informed the Parish Council of proposals to reduce the senior management team at Cambridgeshire Fire & Rescue Services and share senior expertise with neighbouring Bedfordshire and Hertfordshire in the event of a major incident or risk. Councillor Wisson also mentioned that discussions had taken place on devolution in the eastern region and more recently had concentrated on a potential devolution deal between Peterborough City Council and authorities in Cambridgeshire. The original proposal had envisaged a wider authority encompassing 22 councils in Cambridgeshire, Norfolk and Suffolk with an elected Mayor.

It was reported that Highways England had commenced ecology and traffic survey work in preparation for the improvement scheme to the A428 between the A1 Black Cat roundabout and the Caxton Gibbet junction with the A1198. The Parish Council also was alerted to the start of improvements to the A14 over the next few months and the location of work compounds in Buckden and Godmanchester to minimise the impact on local roads.

It having been pointed out that the road signs on Paxton Hill were obscured by overgrown shrubs/trees etc, the Clerk undertook to request the County Council to cut and maintain them.

5. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 14th March 2016 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

6. ALLOCATION OF RESPONSIBILITIES

RESOLVED

that responsibility be allocated to the following Councillors for specific areas of the Council's business –

- | | | |
|------|--------------------------------|------------------------|
| i. | Saxon Green | - Councillor D Beattie |
| ii. | Community Room | - Councillor J Addison |
| iii. | Speedwatch/Neighbourhood Watch | - Councillor P Goodyer |
| iv. | Recreation Ground | - Councillor P Goodyer |
| v. | Parish Paths | - Councillor S Peters |
| vi. | Highways | - Councillor S Peters |
| vii. | Planning and Building | - All Councillors |

7. COUNCIL CONSTITUTION AND POLICIES/PROCEDURES

In the absence of any significant change to Council documents over the past year, the Council

RESOLVED

that the following Council policies and procedures be adopted for the ensuing year -

- i. Standing Orders
- ii. Financial Regulations
- iii. Code of Conduct
- iv. Openness & Transparency Code 2014
- v. Risk Assessment

- vi. Inventory of Assets
- vii. Insurance Cover
- viii. Complaints Procedure
- ix. Freedom of Information 2000 and Data Protection Act 1998 – Requests for information under the Acts and procedures for handling
- x. Press & Media Procedure
- xi. Equal Opportunities

8. INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT

The Clerk reported that the Council's Internal Auditor had confirmed that all control objectives had been achieved during the financial year 2015/16 'to a standard adequate to meet the needs of' the Parish Council. Having expressed their satisfaction with the services of the Internal Auditor, it was

RESOLVED

that the appreciation of the Parish Council be conveyed to the Internal Auditor for her assistance in completing the Annual Return and that she be invited to undertake the task again in 2016/17.

9. ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT

(a) Annual Governance Statement 2015/16

Having received a copy of the Annual Return for the year ended 31st March 2016 (which included the conclusions of the Internal Auditor) and considered and responded 'yes' to each of the accounting statements in turn, the Parish Council

RESOLVED

that the accounting statements be agreed and the Chairman and Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer be authorised to sign the Return on behalf of the Parish Council.

(b) Accounting Statements 2015/16

RESOLVED

that the accounting statements for 2015/16 be approved and the Chairman and Clerk/Responsible Finance Officer be authorised sign the Return on behalf of the Parish Council for submission to the External Auditor.

10. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

- (a) Application No 16/00452/HHFUL - Single storey front extension. Demolition of existing side utility room. Single storey rear extension following the demolition of the existing conservatory, 49 London Lane, Great Paxton**
- (b) Application No – 16/00664/HHFUL - Rear Extension with mono pitch roof and porch extension with mono pitch roof, 6 Rectory Close, Great Paxton**

Having been advised that the Parish Council had raised no objection to Application Nos 16/00452/HHFUL and 16/00664/FUL and that the District Council had subsequently granted planning permission for both proposals on 9th and 20th May respectively, it was

RESOLVED

that the decision of Huntingdonshire District Council to approve Application Nos 16/00452/HHFUL and 16/00664/HHFUL be noted.

11. LHI FUNDING – PROPOSED IMPROVEMENTS TO THE B1043, PAXTON HILL

Councillors considered a series of plans prepared by the County Engineer (copies of which had been circulated in advance of the meeting) to implement the improvements envisaged by the Parish Council's successful LHI application for work to the B1043, Paxton Hill.

Having been present at a site meeting and discussed the proposals with the engineer, Councillor Mrs Peters responded to a series of questions posed by the Parish Council.

Having discussed the plans in detail, the Parish Council was of the view that they did not currently meet the objectives of its approved application which was to –

- introduce a 50mph speed limit from the double mini roundabout at Priory Park to Paxton Hill;
- install double white lines on the bridge either in the middle or to the side to narrow its width and slow traffic;
- introduce a 40mph speed limit from the bridge to Great Paxton village; and
- erect traffic warning signs to prompt road users to beware of cyclists.

The Parish Council also requested that 'rumble strips' be installed on entry to the village and a 40mph speed limit introduced on approach to the bridge but it was acknowledged that these were not part of the original application. The Parish Council also discussed the potential for the installation of chicanes, similar to those used in neighbouring villages, and anticipated that this might form part of its application for funding in 2017/18.

Whereupon, it was

RESOLVED

that the County Engineer be advised that the Parish Council was not satisfied with the draft proposals for the B1043, Paxton Hill and that the County Council be requested to redesign the scheme such that it met the objectives outlined in the Parish Council's original application.

12. ANNUAL INSPECTION – ROSPA

The Parish Council received the Play Area Safety Inspection Report prepared by RoSPA on behalf of the Parish Council. The inspection had focussed on the Saxon Green Play Area. A copy of the report had been circulated, in advance, to Councillors.

Whilst the overall risk rating for the play space was medium, Councillor Peters reported that he had placed an order to enable repairs to be undertaken to the chain links and gate which would reduce the overall risk to low.

On the advice of the Clerk, it was accepted that the Councillor responsible for informal inspection of Saxon Green should report to each Parish Council meeting on the necessity for any repair/maintenance requirements to ensure an ongoing formal record of inspection is maintained.

Subject to the undertaking of the repairs referred to by Councillor Peters, the Parish Council

RESOLVED

that the Play Area Safety Inspection Report be received and noted.

13. ELECTORAL REVIEW OF CAMBRIDGESHIRE; NEW DRAFT RECOMMENDATIONS

As new draft recommendations from the Local Government Boundary Commission on Cambridgeshire County Council related to two wards in Cambridge City and did not vary the previously published outcome for Great Paxton (that it would form part of a St Neots East and Gransden Ward), the Parish Council

RESOLVED

that no further comments be submitted to the Local Government Boundary Commission on the Electoral Review of Cambridgeshire.

14. PROPOSED CYCLE LINK – UPDATE

Councillor Beattie reported that, regrettably, interest in the Cycling Group had appeared to dwindle because of perceived obstacles to achieving the cycle path. He felt it was unlikely that the Group could secure any financial contribution towards a feasibility study but that he would be meeting a Land Architect on site in June to explore route options. Mention was made of the opportunity to apply for funding for small projects from a Legacy Pot of £500,000 being offered by Highways England and linked to the A14 Improvements. County Councillor Wisson undertook to forward details of this Scheme to the Parish Council. Having also been reminded of the opportunity for assistance from the District Council's Community Chest, Councillor Beattie undertook to look into this suggestion.

15. UPDATES

(a) Village Shop

The Parish Council received an update on progress of the village shop. It was understood that the shop would be modelled on a similar and successful operation at Grafham, that a planning application had been submitted and that its status as a 'Community Benefit Society' had been confirmed which would enable certain actions to be taken including the opportunity to open a bank account. Councillors were informed that a well-attended fundraising event had been held at The Bell on 21st May and had raised £1000. It was noted that the next step would involve a share issue to villagers which would entitle shareholders to vote at the AGM. It was hoped that this could raise up to £40,000. Stalls featuring produce likely to be offered in the shop would be located outside The Bell from July.

(b) Village Website

On behalf of David Lloyd, Editor, the Clerk reported that the village website was running well with no specific issues to report. The visitor level had dropped a little with 229 visits in April compared to 259 over the same period in 2015. In contrast, the number of site

changes had increased from 19 to 28 over the quarter January – April. Once again, the Clerk encouraged anyone with items to forward these to the Editor via the ‘editor’s link ‘ on the web site.

Following the report on the Village Shop and the potential use of ‘wordpress software’ to host a blog on the shop website, bearing in mind the difficulty the Parish Council has had in encouraging volunteers for the Speedwatch scheme and having monitored information about the website for some time, Councillors discussed whether there was an opportunity to engage more dynamically with residents through an interactive blog or ‘live chat’ and ‘Facebook’. The Parish Council requested the Clerk to discuss the possible use of such features with the Editor.

(c) Highways, footpaths, trees etc

Over the course of the meeting, Parish Councillors raised the following items/locations that required attention and requested the Clerk to pursue them with the appropriate authorities –

Obscured signs, Paxton Hill
Sinking pot hole, Church Lane
Oak tree, the Green, Church Lane
Conifers, Meadow Lane
Conifers, near Ibbetts
Long grass, River Lane footpath

16. FINANCE MATTERS

Having noted the financial statement for the period to 29th April 2016 and discussed making a donation to the Recreation Ground Committee for 2015/16, it was

RESOLVED

(a) that the following invoices and payments be approved –

8th March - xlpres	£152.00
16th March - Great Paxton School, Hire of hall for meetings	£60
6th April - Playsafety Limited (Annual Inspection)	£92.40
11th April - CPALC	£286.08
3rd May - Valerie Seekings, Internal Auditor	£50.00
HMRC	£4.94
Mrs C Brandon - Reimbursement of expenses (2nd class stamps £6.60), mileage (30 miles @.40p per mile) and quarterly working from home expenses	£115.60
Mrs C Brandon - Salary from 14th March to 20th May 2016 (10 weeks)	£695.06

(b) that a donation of £1250 be made to the Recreation Ground Committee for the year 2015/16; and

(c) that the Chairman of the Recreation Ground Committee be invited to attend the next meeting to update the Council on the current position with regard to the Recreation Ground and football club.

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

Monday 11th July 2016 at 8pm.

Chairman