

# **GRAFFHAM PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF GRAFFHAM PARISH COUNCIL HELD ON FRIDAY 18 SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 7.0PM AT THE EMPIRE HALL, GRAFFHAM**

**Present:** Cllr. H. Charman, Cllr. S. Macqueen and Cllr. J. Uphill (Chairman)  
**In Attendance:** Three members of the public.  
Ms. Tracy Rowe, Clerk

The Chairman, Cllr. John Uphill, welcomed all those present.

29. **To receive apologies for absence**

Apologies had been received from Cllr. P. Churchward, Cllr. S. Mackie, CDCllr. A. Sutton and WSCllr. Bradford.

30. **To receive any declarations of interest from members and dispensation requests in respect of any items on the Agenda**

There were none.

31. **To approve the following Minutes:** Minutes of the GPC Meeting held on 14 July 2020; Minutes of the GPC Planning Meeting held on 18 August 2020.

- Having been proposed as correct by Cllr. Charman and seconded by Cllr. Uphill, the GPC minutes of 14<sup>th</sup> July 2020 were **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** as **APPROVED**, and were signed as a correct record by the Chairman of that meeting, Cllr. Uphill.
- Having been proposed as correct by Cllr. Uphill and seconded by Cllr. Macqueen, the minutes of the GPC Planning Committee meeting held on 18 August 2020, were **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** as **APPROVED** and were signed as a correct record by the chairman of that meeting, Cllr. Macqueen.

32. **To receive a report from West Sussex County Councillor David Bradford.** WSCllr. Bradford had submitted a report in advance which is reproduced in full below:

The latest Coronavirus Report from WSCC states that, over a 14-day period to August 23rd, the overall rate per 100,00 population in West Sussex remains BELOW the England rate at 10.2 cases compared to 22.5 for England. No need for complacency of course. You will be aware that schools are ready for the new term; if you have any queries then there are frequent reports on the WSCC website; a special video made by our students and teachers is there to reassure children.

There is a new temporary cycleway scheme in Chichester; I went past last week but couldn't see any cycles! Still, there is a survey to take part in if you so desire. Separately, if you are part of the Blue Badge concession scheme, note that after 30th September they will start to get tough again, so make sure you renew at the right time! Go online or call 01243 777653.

More importantly, looking after mental health in lockdown is very important and details are noted on the 'NHS Every Mind Matters' website.

Although we are primarily a rural community in Rother Valley, we still have particularly with those that use Haslemere Station, people that go all the way to London. The present situation has exposed how potty we all are going on EXPENSIVE trains and overcrowded tubes etc. Most are now working from home all or part of the time – the big question is: "is this temporary or permanent?". Personally, I hope we don't go back to the old way. I have two little grandchildren who now see their Mum and Dad far more than before, and where the family saves a lot on travel. I don't agree with the Government trying to force people back to the workplace – we have the chance to make a lifetime 'step-change' so let's grab it!

The planning laws need amending so that redundant retail properties can further convert into much needed housing much more quickly.

I am very excited by the opportunities before us. Out of tragedy some good may arise!

33. **To receive a report from Chichester District Councillor Alan Sutton.** CDCllr Sutton had submitted a report in advance which is reproduced in full below:

Some of you may be aware that I had major open-heart surgery a few weeks ago following a sudden illness in July. I am recovering well, although it will be a few more weeks until I am fully physically recovered.

However, I have now resumed my duties as a councillor and cabinet member on a phased return to duties. I will of course continue to support the parish council in any way I can. I am unable to attend face to face meetings at present but as almost all meetings are virtual this does not present a problem.

I resumed the last of my suspended duties last week, returning to the planning committee.

The District Council has been quiet but staff are starting to return to work 2 days a week.

I have continued to sit on the Housing and Communities and the Economic and High Street recovery teams at CDC. These have started working and it has become clear that the need for more flexibility on the approach to high streets has become more important. It is vital to get the message out that high streets and town centres are open for business across the District. Trends have shown that people are continuing to shop locally and rural farm shops are continuing to do well although footfall has shown that a younger demographic are going into Chichester.

Events are crucial going forward and the Great Sussex Way (formerly Visit Chichester) under the chairmanship of Francis Hobbs will soon be marketed with a view to advertising events and opportunities throughout Sussex.

The National Park has a grant aimed at supporting anyone in the visitor economy. CDC also has open applications for grants for both business and community-based projects affected by Covid-19. The District Council want to continue to encourage entrepreneurship from business that have worked in innovative new ways, such as pubs that have started takeaway businesses and we wish for them to continue without unnecessary hindrance.

The District Council is in negotiations to receive a substantial grant to plant trees in the District which in light of the ash tree die back will be welcomed.

34. **Public Questions.** Two of the parishioners' present wished to discuss the planning application SDNP/20/01860/HOUS Apple Trees, Graffham Street, GU28 0NS. This had been discussed at GPC's Planning Committee Meeting on 18 August 2020 at which GPC had unanimously resolved to submit a SUPPORT response. The member of public stated that they lived in the property next door, but had not been informed by CDC of the planning application – the planning notice was made available for display to the application on 16th July 2020 and was in fact only displayed on or around 7th August 2020. Due to the fact that they were away, they had been unable to meet the original representation deadlines and had been unable to discuss the matter with GPC. The member of public noted that the proposal for Apple Trees, was not just to simply "square off" the existing property, as stated in GPC's minutes of 18 August, but was going up a height of 1.6 metres in height. He asked whether the GPC councillors had noticed that their property, Pound Cottage, was lower than Apple Trees – meaning that if the development were to go ahead, then Apple Trees would be significantly higher, and would overlook their house. He noted that he had submitted his own Objection to CDC, stated that he wished to draw attention to the proximity of the proposed extension and garage in relation to the property boundary of Pound Cottage, noting that the ground floor of Pound Cottage is already approximately 1.8m lower in relation to the ground floor of Apple Trees and as such any foundations could have a serious impact on the retaining wall between the two properties. He stated that the proposed new garage is situated extremely close to the boundary adjacent to the Pound Cottage garage. The wall of the Pound Cottage garage is also the retaining wall between the two properties. It is normal practice for light timber framed garages to be built on raft foundations and this would be the worst case for the retaining wall, since it will place a surcharge right next to the retaining wall, close to its top. The foundation would need to extend down to below the Pound Cottage floor level in order not to overburden the retaining wall. This same concern is echoed in relation to the main house extension and the Pound Cottage retaining wall. The neighbour present, had requested that CDC set a Pre-commencement Planning Condition that a Party Wall Notice is served and agreed and that a site visit be undertaken prior to any decisions on planning.

Cllr. Macqueen, Chair of the GPC Planning Committee, stated that CDC would take note of the parishioners' comments.

The other member of public present had no questions, but was just present out of interest.

35. **Update on Callows: SDNP/18/00938/FUL Callows, Graffham.** There was nothing to report.
36. **Update on Land at Homes of Rest SDNP/14/02844/FUL** It was noted that there had been a potential buyer of the site but unfortunately this sale had not gone through, so the owners were still Reside. Concern was raised that the site was an eyesore and was unpleasant for those parishioners who actually still live on site and also nearby. It was agreed that a letter be written to Andrew Griffith MP, noting that even though there is a condition on planning that building works should commence within three years, it has been some six years since consent was granted, yet no building works had commenced other than the demolition of some buildings. Concern was raised that the site might be left as is, indefinitely. A letter would also be issued requesting that the site be tidied up: the heras fencing be removed, the post and rail fence be reinstated, and the tons of concrete rubble be removed.

**Action: Cllr. Macqueen/Cllr. Uphill**

37. **Planning including:**

Cllr. Macqueen, Chair of GPC Planning Committee, took the lead on the following items

a) **New applications**

**SDNP/20/03444/CND Empire Hall, The Street, Graffham GU28 0QB Proposed rear entrance porch and the retention of a storage cage to securely house portable gas canisters (Variation of condition 1 from planning permission SDNP/19/04913/FUL – revised plans with higher dwarf walls to the north and south elevations**

Cllr. Macqueen explained that a site visit had not taken place as the application details sets out the situation which in effect states that the scheme was reduced due to lack of funds and that has now changed. The request is to create a dwarf wall to the sides of the rear entrance porch and the retention of a storage cage to securely house portable gas canisters. Following discussion, it was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Clerk be instructed to submit a **SUPPORT** response with no further comments. **Action: Clerk**

**SDNP/20/03732/LDP Bluebell Wood, Topleigh Road, Graffham GU28 OPA Installation of a non-domestic ground source heat pump.**

Cllr. Macqueen noted that a site visit had not taken place as there would be little to see and in the event of consent being granted there would be little to see when the work was completed, the heat pump being underground on land at the back of the estate. Prior to this meeting, Cllr. Macqueen had sought clarification from the energy consultants/designers/installers of the proposed heat pump as to why it was described as “non-domestic”. He had been advised that the “non-domestic” status of the system simply refers to the scheme of RHI subsidy that will be applied for. The system itself would not be a commercial plant by way of planning, it would only be supplying heat locally to two domestic properties. Although this was clearly a domestic scheme, the government subsidy scheme categorised it differently. Following discussion, it was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** that the Clerk be instructed to submit a **SUPPORT** response with no further comments. **Action: Clerk.**

b) **To receive any late or amended applications.** There were none.

c) **To note responses given by Graffham Parish Council since the last meeting on 14<sup>th</sup> July**

SDNP/20/02351/HOUS The Laurels, The Street, Graffham GU28 0QA. Object with comments.

SDNP/20/01926/HOUS 14 Guillods Cottages, Graffham GU28 0NR Support.

SDNP/20/02416/TCA 1 Hillside, Graffham Street, GU28 0NP. Support

SDNP/20/02260/FUL Brackwood, Graffham Common Road, GU28 0PT. Support

SDNP/20/02542/CND Blytheswood, Graffham Common Road GU28 0PT Support

SDNP/20/01860/HOUS Apple Trees, Graffham Street, GU28 0ND Support

SDNP/20/02725/TCA Pin Mill House, Graffham Street, GU28 0NL No response.

d) **To note decisions from CDC/SDNPA and to note withdrawn applications:**

SDNP/20/01750/LDE Brackwood, Graffham Common Road. Approved.

SDNP/20/02042/LDP. Heath Ridge. Graffham Common Road. Approved.

SDNP/01430/FUL Glasses Barn. Graffham Common Road. Approved.

SDNP/20/01431/HOUS Shuttles, Graffham Common Road. Approved.

SDNP/20/02351/HOUS The Laurels. The Street. Graffham. Refused.

SDNP/20/02416/TCA. 1 Hillside. Graffham Street. Approved

SDNP/20/02260/FUL Brackwood, Graffham Common Road, GU28 0PT. Approved.

SDNP/20/01926/HOUS, 14 Guillods, Graffham GU28 0NR Approved

SDNP/20/02542/CND Blytheswood, Graffham Common Road GU28 0PT Approved

**38. Finance**

Cllr. H. Charman, GPC Vice-Chair and Chairman of GPC Finance Committee, led this item.

Prior to the meeting the Clerk/RFO, had circulated the following documents:

- Bank reconciliation as at 10 September 2020
- Statement of Accounts as at 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020 reconciling to the bank as at 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020
- Receipts/Payments List as at 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020 showing cheques 866 – 872 reconciling to bank reconciliation as at 10 September 2020. The document also showed receipts in the period up 9 September.

(a) **To review the bank reconciliation as at 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020** – Cllr. Charman presented and explained the bank reconciliation and proposed that it be approved. The bank reconciliation was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** as approved and Cllr. Charman, as Chair of the Finance Committee, duly signed the bank reconciliation.

(b) **To review the current statement of accounts – actual receipts and expenditure against budget as at 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020 reconciling to the bank reconciliation as at 10<sup>th</sup> September 2020.**

Cllr. Charman presented and explained this document, noting that some of the figures showing as under budget in the last column were due to timing issues e.g. the Clerk’s wages. Having confirmed that there were no queries, the document was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** as approved. Cllr. Charman, as Chair of the Finance Committee, duly authorised the document.

(c) **To ratify receipts and payments made since the last meeting on 14 July 2020**

The document showing receipts until 30 January 2020 and cheques 866 - 872 was reviewed. Cllr. Charman noted that all payments were for regular items. The document was **UNANIMOUSLY RESOLVED** as approved. Cllr. Charman, Chair of the Finance Committee, duly authorised the document.

39. **To receive reports on or from:**  
**Highways and footpaths.** There was nothing to report.  
**Recreation Ground and Playground.** The children’s playground was now open.  
The toilets inside the pavilion would be available for the tennis matches throughout the Autumn to March, but they would not be open to the general public.  
**Empire Hall.** Some exercise classes had now recommenced.  
**Selham and Ambersham.** No report was given.
40. **War Memorial Renovations** (Minute 23, 14 July 2020 refers). Pre-grant application advice had been received from War Memorials Trust noting that works to improve the legibility of inscriptions, including the in-painting of incised lettering, was eligible for funding, but that the project was low priority for grant funding. The next grant round was December 2020. Two stonemasons had previously been consulted on the re-lettering and had each suggested that a signwriter who could work by hand might be able to the works. Three had been approached: one had replied giving a quote of some £230, one would be visiting the War Memorial shortly. The War Memorial Trust had also suggested additional works (which would not be eligible for grant funding) being re-pointing, with suggested methods being outlined.
41. **Changes to the Current Planning System.** Cllr. Macqueen, Chair of GPC Planning Committee, had attended the Virtual CDC All Parishes Meeting at which changes to the planning system were highlighted. None of these planning changes appeared to particularly affect Graffham as it was in the South Downs National Park.
42. **Parish Matters (Clerk and Councillors)** A complaint had been received about Graffham School Traffic, noting the dangerous parking on the hill to the Church, with children wandering around the road, parents chatting in the middle of the road etc and the excessive driving speed of parents through the village. It had been pointed out that with cars parked on the corner by the Lavington Stud entrance and Graffham School an accident was waiting to happen. A request had been made to GPC that it liaise with the school, and suggest that guidance be given by the school, to parents on appropriate driving and parking. A suggestion was made again about a walking bus or a mini bus serving the Infant School. Discussion ensued and it was agreed that a letter would be sent to the Headmistress.  
**Action: Chairman/Clerk**
43. **Website Accessibility Regulations 2018. Note the need to appoint somebody to be responsible for Parish Online**  
Minutes refer: Minute 41, 5<sup>th</sup> July 2019; Minute 61, 27 September 2019; Minute 81, 15 November 2019; Minute 103; 17 January 2020; Minute 122, 13 March 2020; Min 25, 14 July 2020 refers. The Chairman would review this matter and also discuss with Tom Richardson what was required for GPC to now manage and maintain the website.
44. **Correspondence and Invitations received** Horndean Site I Gas oil wells (Singleton Oil Well) Minute 26, 14 July refers). At his request, a letter had been sent to Andrew Griffith MP and his Senior Constituency Researcher outlining questions which Mr. Griffith could put to Defra about this issue.  
GPC would like to thank Mr. Stewart Smith for his continuing advice and the support he offers to GPC regarding these and other matters relating to Minerals.
45. **Date of next meeting.** Friday 20 November 2020
46. **Parish Council Meetings 2020-21.** Friday 15 January 2021. Friday 12 March 2021. Monday 10 May 2021 – Annual Meeting of the Parish.

The meeting closed at 8.00pm.

These minutes are an accurate record of events.

.....Cllr. John Uphill, Chairman  
(Chairman of GPC)

..... Date