

GRAFFHAM PARISH COUNCIL
DRAFT OCTOBER MEETING MINUTES

WEDNESDAY 4th OCTOBER 2023

GRAFFHAM RECREATION GROUND PAVILLION

Meeting opened at: 19.10	ACTION
<p><u>PRESENT</u> Cllr. Roger Coakes, Cllr. John Bracey, Cllr. Charles (Sandy) Macqueen, Cllr. Colin Barker, Cllr Jon Warren, Cllr. Gillian Charlesworth, Cllr. Fiona Jacob,</p>	
<p><u>IN ATTENDANCE</u> Amy Harte (Locum Clerk) Cllr John Cross (District Councillor) Two parishioners.</p>	
<p><u>13/23</u> AGENDA ITEM 1: WELCOME The Chairman welcomed all and made introductions to members of the public present.</p>	
<p><u>14/23</u> AGENDA ITEM 2: APPOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE Cllr. Joanna Morris, Cllr. Rachel Gerrett sent their apologies. Cllr Tom Richardson (County Councillor) was not present, so we assume his apologies.</p>	
<p><u>15/23</u> AGENDA ITEM 3: DECLARATION OF INTERESTS None</p>	
<p><u>16/23</u> AGENDA ITEM 4: MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETINGS HELD ON 11TH JULY and 14TH AUGUST TO BE AGREED AND SIGNED AS A TRUE RECORD. The Council RESOLVED that the minutes of both 11th July PC Meeting and 14th August Finance Committee meeting were an accurate record of the respective meetings. 4.2 Report on Action Points form the last meetings. Website Updating – Problems with access to current website. A new website is required. Cllr Jon Warren suggested separating the website from East Lavington. The new clerk will be asked to investigate creation of a new website. Hedges and roadside edges – Cllr Morris has placed a notice in the parish magazine to try to get this issue attended to. Tom Richardson – surplus signs at Pound Corner are still there and more have been left. Nothing has happened in regard to the road near Topleigh stables. Planning Comments have been submitted by Cllr MacQueen</p>	<p>New clerk to investigate new website</p> <p>Cllr Richardson to speak to WSCC highways.</p>
<p><u>17/23</u> AGENDA ITEM 5: VISITORS QUESTIONS</p>	

<p>Observation on website form a member of the public – Not sensible to have a joint website with another parish</p>	
<p><u>18/23</u> AGENDA ITEM 6: COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT (Mr Tom Richardson, County Councillor) Cllr Richardson was not present at the meeting.</p>	
<p><u>19/23</u> AGENDA ITEM 7: DISTRICT COUNCILLOR'S REPORT (Mr John Cross, District Councillor) Cllr Cross sent a report - See Annex A Held first surgery at the Graffham Village Shop – will be doing another in a month's time. Parishioners can attend at any venue. Westlands held a carbon zero day, it was interesting and made good business sense. Planning – New TAN regarding stables and horse fields. Stables being built etc creating incremental development. The TAN will give warning about this process. Grants investigated – Rec Ground - Grant place and spaces 1 & 2. Cllr Cross will forward the relevant information to the Chairman. The report sent by Cllr Cross is general across the entire area. Couldn't find the dates for GPC Meetings – they are on the website. Cllr Cross was asked his opinion on Wild Camping made by Andrew Griffith. Cllr Barker will forward the information to him. Deer management was discussed – Trying to create a market for West Sussex Deer. Cllr Bracey spoke about a wholesaler for Venison in Duncton and possibly within the parish.</p>	<p>Cllr Cross to forward information on grants for the Recreation ground</p> <p>Cllr Barker to forward information to Cllr Cross.</p>
<p><u>20/23</u> AGENDA ITEM 8: PLANNING - Applications & decisions, 8.1. SDNP/23/03780/HOUS Down House The Street Graffham West Sussex GU28 0QA Single storey rear & side extension. Replacement porch & removal of bay window. Annex conversion and demolition of garage. Comments required by Fri 20 Oct 2023. Cllr Barker and MacQueen visited the site and felt that this application is fine. However, there is an existing application on this site which is still in progress. He proposed to support the current application making it clear to CDC that the council do not support the previous application. A discussion regarding change of use and the previous application took place. Cllr Barker mentioned the dark skies policy regarding glass doors into the annex. Cllr MacQueen will prepare comment for circulation and then submission</p>	<p>Cllr MacQueen to draft a response for approval and sending.</p>
<p><u>21/23</u> AGENDA ITEM 9: FINANCE See Annex B 1. Approval of Accounts to 04/10/23 – new clerk to set up the cash book – Cllr Charlesworth sees no discrepancies.</p>	<p>New Clerk to set up cash book.</p>

Since the meeting in July we have received the approval of the AGAR for 22-23. The operating position year to date has been investigated by Cllr Charlesworth. Discussion on the maintenance cost took place, suggested that this requires a review.

VAT reclaim – Cllr Bracey suggested displaying the budget without the VAT or showing this separately.

Current situation assessed by Cllr Charlesworth – See Annex B Looks like the precept does not cover the current budget, not quite balancing the books. Cashflow is in a comfortable position. This will erode the reserves. At precept setting this should be considered.

2. Other Financial Issues

2.1 Budget

2.2 Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

CIL started with a balance of £26,621 plus an additional 17,002 transferred over from the reserve account as it was identified as CIL funds.

CIL spending to date includes flagpole £556, war memorial tree £720, but Cllr Barker thinks there is a further £1,780 to be paid. Rec patio £2,000 paid.

Selham phone box to be paid £500. It was agreed that Rec maintenance grant £2,500 would not come out of CIL.

Items to be considered are playground £20,000. Phone box / Defib estimated £3,540 but need an updated cost on this Cllr Bracey will investigate. Community Heartbeat website was mentioned by Cllr Warren - BT will provide free electricity to the defib for 7 years.

Finger posts discussed £5,680 for all 5 but only 2 are most in need of restoration. 2 may just need cleaning, although preservation maybe justified. Volunteers unlikely to have time to do this, not the type of job to be done by volunteers. Topleigh Stables and Last Post ones perhaps just clean. Suggested to apply for a grant separately.

Cllr Cross left the meeting. 19.57

50% of the Tractor purchase for the Recreation ground suggested but more quotes required. Cllr Bracey looked for a replacement for what is there now. Second hand £9950 nearly 10 years old. Not sure how long the current one lasted. New tractor and mower will have warranty and tractor will be able to do more – rollers, perhaps trailers for things. Proposal for new notice board not considered.

All items mentioned would leave £5800. The council was asked if they wanted to go ahead with any or all of the proposed items. What do we allocate now? Playground £20000, the defib needs some revision in the £3540 based on the quote for restoration of the phonebox. Finger posts and tractor – if not would leave £13800 If finger posts done it would leave about £9000. Cllr Bracey suggested taking the tractor out. Suggested applying for a grant for the tractor. Councillors RESOLVED to go ahead with the projects mentioned apart from the tractor. Cllr Coakes would like to leave some in case anything else comes up. Discussion of whether any further CIL would be forthcoming took place.

Cllr Bracey to investigate the cost of Phone Box and Defib project.

Action CIL funded projects – all councillors.

22/23

<p>AGENDA ITEM 10: CORRESPONDENCE AND INVITATIONS RECEIVED SINCE LAST MEETING.</p> <p>10.1 Circulated by email</p> <p>Communication form parishioners - Wild camping & Gatwick runway extension</p> <p>Winter resilience plan – Cllr Morris is working on this.</p> <p>WSALC – Chairs and Vice Chairs 11th October by Zoom</p> <p>WSALC - AGM and conference at Billingshurst Friday 20th October</p>	
<p><u>23/23</u></p> <p>AGENDA ITEM 11: REPORTS RE: ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS, COURSES AND OR SEMINARS SINCE LAST MEETING.</p>	
<p><u>24/23</u></p> <p>AGENDA ITEM 12: PARISH MATTERS</p> <p>1. Rights of Way & Highways Cllr Morris has done a lot of work on the highways. she perhaps can chase up the redundant signs and condition at Topleigh. Road closures were concerning – for BT Openreach. Road closures and diversions are necessary for the installation of the broadband. The Parish Council has done all it can to try to avoid these, however legislation will not allow openreach to complete the works without them. There is still access.</p> <p>2. Recreation Ground Report Report Annex C - 7 funding applications have been made for the new playground. £50000 grant applications have been made inc. £20000 – not all secured. Nothing happened during July & Aug. One grant will only be given once you have 80%. Another Lottery Fund may be applicable. Need to get the project moving this winter. Perhaps phasing the project, for example dismantling the existing, as some equipment is in poor condition. Need absolutes before phasing as need to know the total required can be achieved before beginning the project.</p> <p>3. Empire Hall Stephanie has stepped down, Sally taking some of the responsibility. £10000 grant received for the sound system.</p> <p>4. Selham and Ambersham</p> <p>5. Environment Alicia Burke – suggested purchasing a bench with a plaque Cllr Barker suggested by the War Memorial. Would be a prominent position Cllr Barker to get in touch with the person that sent the message. Wild Camping – Andrew Griffith sent an email regarding this. Cllr Barker asked for the council’s opinions on this. There were concerns over fires, rubbish etc. Andrew Griffith has asked for people to email him. Andrew Griffith things it not suitable for this area and it was felt that the council should write an email to him to express support for his opinion. Cllr Barker to write an email to Andrew Griffith Oak tree quote has been requested to be updated by Cllr Barker, he is waiting for a response. Vehicles by Ambersham often seen by the road – camper vans etc. This is not an area for camping so what can be done. Cllr Barker suggested informing the police.</p>	<p>Cllr Morris to contact WSCC regarding signs and road condition.</p> <p>Cllr Barker to contact regarding bench position and to write to Andrew Griffith regarding the Wild Camping.</p>

25/23

AGENDA ITEM 12: Dates of Forthcoming Meetings

Wednesday 22nd November 2023

Wednesday 10th January 2024

Venue of meetings – discussed using either the Empire Hall or The Pavillion. Cllr Bracey pointed out that it was free to use the Pavilion and a nicer venue. Wifi currently only available in The Empire Hall.

These minutes are an accurate record of the meeting

Signed:

Name & Position:

Date:

Meeting closed

20:55

Annex A

CDC MATTERS: Fittleworth Ward

Four months into my role, I am finally beginning to get a grip on the roles and tasks I have been assigned as well as meeting all the parish councils, committees and interest groups. This has been a steep learning curve, but fascinating to meet the different groups and to learn about how local government works. My inbox and where I get most direct communication from you, the residents, is planning. District Councillors are independent from the planning officers, so we cannot be involved in the detail of an application, unless it goes to the planning committee, but we can ask questions and hopefully make access and the process more coherent. If you do ask me to intervene, I will not give opinions or thoughts on the merit of an application. The reason for this is that I am on the planning committee, and should the application come to the planning committee, and I am pre-determined before a meeting then I am not able to speak or vote. This would clearly not be in the interest of the applicants who live in this ward.

The District Council are also currently promoting a range of home energy efficiency grants. Residents can apply for help to fund air source heat pumps, insulation or solar panels. They can check eligibility and find out more by visiting: www.warmerhomes.org.uk or calling 0800 038 5737. CDC have held two resident events highlighting the options available and they hope to hold another of these events in the year ahead. Tips on how people can reduce their carbon footprint, along with online calculators that offer personalised advice can also be found here www.chichester.gov.uk/climatechange

The District Council has been continuing to work with the other districts and borough councils in West Sussex and government agencies, to crack down on fly tipping. In February, the council joined Sussex Police, His Majesty's Revenue and Customs, the Driver and Vehicle Standards Agency and the Environment Agency, to stop and check commercial vehicles that were potentially carrying waste. Within a two-hour period, 40 vehicles were stopped and checked - from small vans to flatbed lorries and skip lorries. Using the powers from all five agencies, action was taken to make sure that commercial operators were legally operating and disposing of waste responsibly. Two businesses not registered to carry waste were told to register as Licensed Waste Carriers within 10 days or face fines of up to £3,000. Fourteen Duty of Care inspections were carried out to check where waste materials had come from, where it was being disposed of, and check the accompanying documentation. Six vehicles were given advisories regarding load limits and lights. One vehicle tested positive for contaminated fuel and a further vehicle was seized for not having insurance. A driver was also warned about having an illegal

number plate; and another vehicle owner was issued with a summons for having no insurance. These joint action days aim to disrupt the activities of those looking to fly tip materials in our beautiful district and to ensure that potential fly tippers know that there will be consequences. You can find out more at <https://www.westsussex.gov.uk/news/workingtogether-to-scrap-fly-tipping/> Residents and businesses can report fly tipping at: www.chichester.gov.uk/reportflytipping.

John Cross

Fittleworth Ward

Chichester District Council

Annex B

Graffham Parish Council meeting Wednesday 4 October Finance Committee Chair report on GPC annual budget and CIL This report provides an up-to-date position for Councillors after the recent hiatus in Finance Committee activity. For ease of understanding, in this report I have separated out the annual operating numbers from the CIL position. For accounting purposes at the year end, they will be brought together in one set of numbers. Since our meeting in July, the annual accounts for 22-23 have been internally audited and submitted to the external auditor. They were late and we incurred two penalties but so far, there have been no other repercussions from the delay and no comments or questions from parishioners on the published numbers. I have now turned my attention to the YTD operating position, the revised budget and the position on CIL expenditure and proposed allocation which are set out below and attached. Also attached is the previous budget versions document to show the comparison with what is now proposed.

Position YTD on operating expenditure not including CIL

The following summary is based on the proposed 23/24 budget discussed last January:

- We are currently underspent on Clerk's salary and PAYE but this is likely to be reversed in the second half as a new Clerk comes up to date. We will not spend £1000 on Council elections and \$137 amount of £3,700 (but see note below on CIL), given that the Clerk advised we should not list unallocated amounts in the budget.
- We are overspent on various sundry expenses such as IT equipment for Clerk (c. £400), annual audit (£120), insurance (£100). Run rate for maintenance is likely to produce £400 overspend for the year.
- We have also carried over some costs from last year which were incurred but not included in the annual accounts so the forecast is not an accurate reflection of our annual operating costs.

One of these items was a VAT reclaim for £2598 for the Rec groundworks (see below).

Budget taking into account half year actuals and forecast

A proposed new budget for the Parish Council's approval is attached which takes into account half year actuals and forecast. Given the VAT payment explained below, we will end the year with lower reserves. Given the uncertainty over future CIL receipts and the ongoing maintenance needs (eg. Rec and new playground), when we consider next year's precept later this year, we should be looking at an increase to keep pace with increased costs, unless we decide to run down reserves somewhat.

Cashflow and reserves

In terms of cashflow, we are in a comfortable position. We started the year with a healthy current account balance of £15k before receipt of the first tranche of precept (£6,500) in May. Note on VAT: during last FY, we received for Rec works but didn't pay out to the Rec, a reclaim of £2598 from HMRC. This has since been paid to the Rec and will be accounted for this year. This was for groundworks done last year, the VAT for which the Parish Council could reclaim.

Position on CIL funds, allocations and proposals

The reserve account (which I am equating to CIL fund) started the year with a balance of £27,851 and we have since received £17,002 additional CIL funds which should be transferred into the reserve account to identify it as CIL, less the spent/agreed amounts below which total £6,276.

CIL spending to date during 23/24 covers:

- Flagpole: £556 against a budget of £400
- War memorial tree: £720 against a budget of £2,500
- Rec Patio: £2,000 against a budget of £2,000
- Selham phone box: £500 against a budget of £500, agreed but not invoiced
- Rec maintenance grant: £2,500

This last sum for Rec maintenance was I think, intended to come out of the S137 'maximum' allocation from CIL' in the proposed budget but for clarity I have transferred this to the CIL list and taken it out of operating budget. Fiona is finding out whether we can use CIL money for maintenance. However, we know that CIL money is not a regular income stream so if this is to be a regular call on funds, we may wish to put it in the operating budget covered by precept money. We can address this when setting next year's budget.

This leaves £38,577 in the CIL fund as at September 2023.

The further calls upon CIL discussed at the last Finance meeting and for the Council to consider are:

- Playground £20,000
- Phone box/defib: £3,540
- Finger posts £3,680 for three of the five (£5,680 for all five)
- 50% of new Rec tractor: £4,250 (A proposal for a new noticeboard was thought no longer to be needed).

c.£7,100 would be left in the fund if all of these were to be agreed. We do not currently know whether or when further CIL funds will be received.

Bank reconciliation

I have carried out a rough bank reconciliation and this is in order. The new Clerk can take this aspect over from me and Sandy and create the annual cashbook.

Katherine Maud Guillod Fund

I have made some progress in finding out what we need to do to regain access to the KMGF and the first step is for all new Councillors to be registered with the Charity Commission as Trustees. Once this has been done, we can add new signatories to the bank account, pay the Health Association and Thursday Club their shares and draw up the annual return to the Charity Commission which needs to go in before year end.

Matters for Parish Council discussion and decision:

- Does the Council agree the revised budget?
- Does the Council wish to decide all CIL allocations at this stage or give further consideration to other potential uses over the coming months? This may be sensible given so many Councillors are new.
- Which CIL bids should be approved now?
- Are there other sources of funding should we look at?
- Jo has suggested that we ask a local volunteer to refurbish the finger posts – for discussion.
- Any other concerns or queries about the financial position.

Budget and Revisions as separate files.

Annex C

Graffham Village Playground Replacement - RFP

Shortlist of providers

- *Wildwood UK*
- *Playscape*
- *Hogmoor Enclosure provider*
- *Queen Elizabeth Country Park provider*
- *Fittleworth provider*
- *Others tbc*

Context

The current village playground is in a very poor state of repair. Most of it is 35 years old, with the latest addition being 20 years ago. It has not been maintained well, so the replacement space, installations and equipment being highly durable and low maintenance is a key consideration. As it is not up to current standards by some margin and in poor repair, it may soon need to be closed on safety grounds, and so we are keen to progress Phase 1 as soon as possible.

Funding

Budget is limited to funding having been secured for Phase 1 at £50k. We would like however to design for a Phase 2 and have further improvements costed and planned for. There is the anticipation that as we have not yet gone to the community for donations or sponsorship, that further funding could be secured once we have the basics in place and get the community excited about these changes. Detailed costs and plans are also required to support further funding applications.

Brief

Key themes for the replacement play area have been agreed and are as follows; community space, suitable for all ages, sustainable, use of natural materials, rustic, wooden, recycled / reused / locally sourced materials where possible. Must be in keeping with its situation (in a village, in the south downs national park), loosely based around a land and farming theme.

Specific equipment / features of interest

1. Swings / zip line
2. Slides, tunnels
3. Climbing frames, nets and structures
4. See-saw
5. Roundabout / other spin
6. Trampolines / other bounce
7. Explore, play, hide, secret places

Scope

In scope

1. Design and costs (Phase 1 at £50k – funding secured)
2. Build and install play equipment for Phase 1
3. Design and costs (Phase 2 £50k – funding not yet secured)

Bids are invited for the Whole scope, Phase 1 or 2 separately, through to proposals for the provision of individual pieces of equipment (including those not specified) that are in keeping with the brief.

Out of scope

- Removal of previous equipment
- Preparation of ground
- Creation of natural boundaries and undulations
- Tree planting and wildflower planting
- Woodchip for all areas under the equipment
- Fencing off the parking area
- Community comms
- H&S / Planning and Insurance comms
- Benches / seating
- Sand pit
- Sensory garden

RFP Questions / considerations

1. Lead in time to start work
2. Build time for structures in proposal
3. Installation / Implementation plan and timeline
4. Contract / key T&C's
5. Any pre requisites – e.g. ground conditions, access, parking, facilities, etc.
6. Costs including VAT
7. Inclusions and exclusions
8. Maintenance charge / warranty provisions
9. Maintenance requirements
10. Is planning permission required
11. H&S inspected / built to which standards
12. Have there been any issues with getting the equipment insured

Timescales and next steps:

Clarification questions to rachel.gerrett@graffham-pc.uk / 07813 155665

Timeframe for responses – Friday 3rd November 2023

- Target timeframe for decision and phase 1 engagement - by end of year 2023
- Target timeframe for initial build – Q1 2024
- Target timeframe for Phase 2 engagement – mid 2024