**Minutes of the Graffham Parish Council meeting on Friday 30th September 2022**

1. **Attendance and Apologies for Absence**

In attendance: Councillors Barker, Coakes, Churchward and Mackie (Chair).

Apologies from: Councillors Bracey, Charman and Macqueen which the Council **RESOLVED** to accept.

Also in attendance: Mike Simpson (Clerk).

1. **Councillor Co-option**

**To receive written applications for the office of Parish Councillor and to Co-opt candidates to fill the existing vacancies**

The Council had received one application for Parish Councillor but it was **AGREED** to defer any co-option until the next meeting to see if any other applications are submitted for the remaining vacancy.

1. **To Receive Declarations of Interest, Notification of Changes to Members’ Interests and consider any requests for a dispensation.**

There were none.

1. **Public Session (Members of the Public may speak for up to five minutes at the discretion of the Chair)**

There were none.

1. **Approval of the minutes from the Parish Council meeting held on 8th August 2022**

The Council **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes from the meeting on 8th August as a true and accurate record.

1. **County Councillor reports**

There were none.

1. **District Councillor reports**

Councillor Sutton provided a written report which advised that there had been a change in what can be put in recycling bins and the District Council was running a service called ‘supporting you’ to help people during the cost-of-living crisis by offering advice on wellbeing as well as finances. He also informed councillors that there was a WSCC grant scheme to help Ukrainian refugees settle into their new communities and a café was running in Petworth on Wednesday mornings at 10am offering IT lessons and the chance for people to socialise. Rough sleepers were down to four and there was a new centre in Chichester offering 17 temporary accommodation units and they were working on refurbishing an old site which could offer another 47. The Council was also working with housing providers to free up stock so certain people could be allocated without waiting on the list.

1. **Chair’s announcements**

The Chair stated that he thought the Queen’s Jubilee bench at the War Memorial looked excellent and the arborist had done a good job of repairing the oak tree. Councillor Baker suggested the tree needed to be crowned and maintained over a 5-year period and it was agreed that an arborist should be contacted. The Chair also said he believed the village fete was a great success and the service on 18th September in memory of Queen Elizabeth II was wonderful and well attended.

1. **Meeting dates**

**To consider and adopt meeting dates for 2022-23**

It was **AGREED** that the next meeting of the Council would be on Monday 21st November 2022 and the meeting after would either be January 20th or 27th 2023.

1. **Planning applications**

**SDNP/22/03799/LIS**: Ladywell Cottage Graffham Street Graffham Petworth West Sussex GU28 0NL Proposal: Single storey rear/side extension, replacement windows, removal of modern fireplace and extension of chimney stack to south elevation.

The Council **RESOLVED** to support this application.

**SDNP/22/03878/HOUS & SDNP/22/03879/LIS**: The Malt House The Street Graffham Petworth West Sussex GU28 0QB Proposal: Garden room extension, new opening to side extension, replacement windows, internal alterations and repairs.

The Council **RESOLVED** to support this application.

**SDNP/22/04212/TCA**: Rectory Cottage Selham Road Selham Graffham Petworth West Sussex Proposal: Notification of intention to reduce height of 1 no. hedgerow tree by 20%.

The Council **RESOLVED** to remain neutral.

1. **Payments and bank reconciliation**

The clerk presented the schedule of payments since the last meeting on 1st August and the August bank reconciliation which Councillors **RESOLVED** to approve.

1. **Variance Report**

The clerk presented the latest variance report in actual vs budget for the current financial year which the Council **RESOLVED** to approve.

**13. Recreation Ground**

 **(a) To receive an update on plans for Graffham playground**

Councillor Bracey circulated a written report from Graffham Recreation in advance of the meeting:

*National Lottery (NL) has unfortunately declined our bid in full, which is a real shame. They have cited three primary reasons;*

*a) Over-demand: Simply too many people applying for funds, and they're trying to prioritise based on who needs it most (see c)*

*b) They feel Graffham has been given sufficient support by NL over the years, in respect of funding already given to the Empire Hall. I have protested on this point as it seems dreadfully unfair, but I do not expect my appeal will gain any traction.*

*c) They have said that whilst they can and have previously funded playgrounds in the past, as funding becomes tighter with cost of living, they're adopting the stance that the local authority should be handling this first, and NL will only step in if there's a practical reason - such as deprived area creating a new play space, or something similar.*

* *Meeting with Chichester Council (CC) was disappointing. There was agreement that the playground was in need of a replacement rather than repair, clearly. CC only provide funding of up to 15k when the project is ready - so only the final funding gap can be applied for, not at the start as we are now. They like projects to be focused on being sustainable and eco, and to have a real community need. You don't have to match-fund it, but they do prefer it if possible. All funding has run out for this year as they missed an application round, so there's a huge backlog, so it would need to be a January Application.* ***One point to consider may be to see if we can match fund any contribution from GPC against CC, which could effectively double the available budget.***
* *One point raised by both CC and NL was why the council wasn't replacing the playground itself. CC said Graffham Parish Council [GPC] (if it is GPC who own or are responsible for the playground) would have costings or budgeting for this in their business plan. This should date from when the playground was installed, accounting for the lifespan of the equipment and providing a budget to ensure the safety and maintenance of the equipment. It was inferred that this pot of money, if not used for the upkeep, should be accounted for and may be available for use in the rebuild.*

***In Summary (Giovanni Soffietto GS)***

*We still have 6 Foundations with bids amounting to c. £18k remaining, but I am not very positive on the outcome as there is a theme repeating in the previous 12 applications rejected. Graffham, being an affluent community without any social markers (high crime, high levels of immigration, large number of kids in poverty etc) is not going to beat the likes of inner city projects in Tower Hamlets, Birmingham or Manchester to the funding pot and with some decent justification.*

*I suppose this loops back around to my query on this right at the very start of this project. Very few foundations seem willing to fund an affluent village's playground in a setting without crime, over-population and other variables, when the council aren't contributing a significant amount themselves. I did query the seal money and this doesn't count towards GPC's business plan / budgeting for the playground as it’s from a third party source.*

*From a proactive standpoint, we need to query where the playground features in the business plan old and current. I have asked for figures when we first approached the project in respect of any upkeep and refurbishment, as this was mentioning in justification of no further work being required. Other than the c. 2k spent on new paint and fencing in c. 2015(? – Unclear date, please clarify) there was no other records predating this available. In absence of this, I am to presume no funds have been spent.*

*Thank you.*

*Application summary below*

**

Councillor Baker suggested that the original equipment could be refurbished if no funding could be acquired and the Clerk advised that a loan from the Public Works Loan Board was also an option.

 **(b) To consider any grant payments to Graffham Recreation Ground charity**

The Clerk circulated a draft grants policy in advance of the meeting which formalised the process for issuing grants and included an application form. Although there was support for the policy it was decided to defer adoption as not all Councillors were able to review the policy before the meeting.

**14.** **To receive reports on or from:**

 **Highways and Footpaths**

Councillor Churchward advised that WSCC were still chasing the landowner regarding the broken foot style at Tagent’s Farm to fix it and there were three to four large trees near Bishop’s Walk that were covering a public right of way that needed removing.

 **Empire Hall**

Councillor Churchward informed the Council that he attended a committee meeting last week and that everything was going well and the hall had the funds to repair the roof if it was broken but they were not yet sure if it was. Hall hire fees had also been increased.

 **Selham and Ambersham**

There was no update.

**15. Village gates**

 **To discuss installing village gates to reduce speeding in the parish**

The Clerk reported that he had spoken to Boxgrove and Halnaker Parish Council and they were happy with their gates and believed they were effective in reducing speeding. The gates cost between £200-£400 and were made of PVC and the next step would be to choose locations and approach WSCC for a licence. Councillor Coakes believed residents might not welcome the sight of them and that Halnaker was a different situation as it was not a built-up area and had the A285 going through it. Councillor Barker suggested the volume of traffic varied in the parish depending on location and time as there was a lot in the early morning as well as the school run and people using the village as a rat run. The Chairman suggested that the parish magazine run an article to consult with residents which Councillors **AGREED** to approve.

16. **Memorial bench and noticeboards**

The Clerk advised that he was still trying to confirm a date with the contractor to install the bench and noticeboard. It was **AGREED** that a header of ‘Graffham’ should be written on the noticeboard.

The meeting ended at 7.45pm.

**Receipts since the last meeting (8th August 2022)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Payer** | **Centre** | **Amount (£)** |
| 31.08.22 | Natwest | Bank interest | 1.33 |
| 01.09.22 | Graffham Recreation | Greenlane (1035) VAT payment | 4,200 |
| 05.09.22 | Graffham Recreation | Greenlane (1036) VAT payment | 4,948 |
| 07.09.22 | Graffham Recreation | Greenlane (1037) VAT payment | 490 |
| 16.09.22 | Chichester District Council | Precept | 6,500 |
|  |  | **Total** | **16,139.33** |

**Payments since the last meeting (8th August 2022)**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Date** | **Payee** | **Centre** | **Amount (£)** |
| 12.08.22 | Graffham Recreation  | Jubilee celebrations | 1,250 |
| 30.08.22 | Mike Simpson | Salary | 390.77 |
| 31.08.22 | Mike Simpson | Home office  | 20.00 |
| 26.09.22 | Greenlane Forestry (1033) | Grounds maintenance | 480.00 |
| 26.09.22 | Greenlane Forestry (1034) | Grounds maintenance | 420.00 |
| 26.09.22 | Empire Hall (710) | Hall hire | 25.00 |
| 26.09.22 | Norwood | Grounds maintenance | 180.00 |
| 30.09.22 | Greenlane Forestry (1035) | Graffham Rec VAT payment | 5,040 |
| 30.09.22 | Greenlane (1036) | Graffham Rec VAT payment | 5,937.60 |
| 30.09.22 | Greenlane (1037) | Graffham Rec VAT payment | 588.00 |
|  |  | **Total** | **14,331.37** |

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Bank reconciliation as at 31st August 2022** |  |  |
|  |  |  | **£** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | Balance per bank statement at 31st August |  |
|  | **Current Account** |  | 11,973.57  |
|  | **Reserve Account** |  | 14,681.04  |
|  | **Total** |  | **26,654.61** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | Add: outstanding receipts |  | 0.00 |
|  |  | Total |  |
|  | Less: outstanding payments |  | 0.00 |
|  |  | Total | 0 |
|  | **Net Balances** |  | **26,654.61** |
|  |  |  |  |
|  | Cash Book |  |  |
|  | Opening balance (1st April) |  | 28,727.53 |
|  | Add Receipts |  | 7,799.18 |
|  | Less payments |  | -9,872.10 |
|  |  |  | **26,654.61** |

**September bank reconciliation**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Balance per bank statement at 26th September |  |  |
| **Current Account** |  | 27,006.57  |
| **Reserve Account** |  | 14,681.04  |
| **Total** |  | **41,687.61** |
|  |  |  |
| Add: outstanding receipts |  | 0.00 |
|  | Total |  |
| Less: outstanding payments |  | 0.00 |
|  | Total | 0 |
| **Net Balances** |  | **41,687.61** |
|  |  |  |
| Cash Book |  |  |
| Opening balance (1st April) |  | 28,727.53 |
| Add Receipts |  | 23,937.18 |
| Less payments |  | -10,977.10 |
|  |  | **41,687.61** |