

GRAFFHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Full Council Meeting
held on 10 January 2024 at Empire Hall, The Street, Graffham

Present:

Councillors Roger Coakes (Chairman), John Bracey (Vice-Chairman), Gillian Charlesworth, Fiona Jacob, Rachel Gerrett and Sandy MacQueen

In attendance:

Caroline Davison – Parish Clerk and RFO
Councillor John Cross – District Councillor
Councillor Tom Richardson
Five members of the Public.

Welcome

51/23. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the Meeting.

Apologies for Absence

52/23 Apologies had been received and accepted from Councillors Colin Barker and Joanna Morris.

Declarations of Interest

53/23 No declarations of pecuniary or non-pecuniary interest were disclosed by members in respect of items on the Agenda.

Casual Vacancy for Parish Councillor

54/23 It was noted that no request to fill the vacancy by means of by-election had been received by Chichester District Council and therefore the Parish Council would be advertising to fill its vacancy by co-option.

Minutes

55/23 **RESOLVED** that the Minutes of the Full Council Meeting held on 6 December 2023 be approved as an accurate record and signed as such by the Chairman.

56/23 There were no action points from the previous meeting to report in respect of items not otherwise included on the Agenda.

Public Participation

57/23 Sally Blunt gave an update report in respect of matters pertaining to Empire Hall. (Full Report attached in the Appendix). The salient points were.

- a) The owners of the property adjacent to the Hall were in the process of obtaining a Licence to Access through their legal advisors to permit access for the erection of scaffolding to enable the essential roofing repairs to be undertaken to the northern roof elevation of the Empire Hall.
- b) The fire service would be updating the risk assessment that week.
- c) Installation of the new AV equipment would hopefully take place in February 2024.

- d) It was noted that there remained a vacancy for a Parish Council representative on the Empire Hall Committee.

58/23 A member of the public requested that when plans were being drawn up for the layout of the new playground equipment space was set aside for potential future installation of a new pickleball/paddle tennis or tennis court with adequate space to be allowed between the location of this and the new playground equipment.

59/23 Concern was raised about several areas in the Parish where hedge cutting, and ditch works were urgently needed to improve accessibility or visibility.

60/23 A question was asked about when the Parish Council would be updating its website. It was noted that an update would be given later in the Agenda.

61/23 There were complaints about ongoing issues with the state of some of the footpaths and footpath accesses. It was noted that these same concerns had been raised at the July Parish Council Meeting by the same parishioner. County Councillor Tom Richardson advised that an inspection of the Rights of Way across the Parish was due to be undertaken by WSCC to determine the state of the same and where works were necessary.

District Councillor Report

62/23 Councillor John Cross updated that he had been informed that there was currently no capacity across the District for the emptying of new refuse or dog bins. Councillor Cross was asked if the new round of CIL funding might be appropriate for the new playground equipment and was given relevant paperwork by Councillor John Bracey on behalf for the Recreation Ground Committee.

West Sussex County Councillor Report

63/23 Councillor Tom Richardson advised that with effect from 14 February 2024 all recycling centres would require booking online or by telephone. He reported that the booking system had been working for the past two years at some recycling sites and the feedback had been positive and the system was working well. An important aspect which was being monitored was that there could potentially be an increase in fly tipping and Councillor Richardson requested that any local issues in this regard were reported directly to him.

The owners of Selham House had installed a new drain to redress the drainage issues creating ponding however there have been problems with the pipework and this needed redoing when weather conditions permitted. It had been discovered that the Highways drain on the other side of the road from Selham house would appear to have nowhere to drain into and is on the list of scheduled works to be hydro jetted. It was advised that Selham House had offered to have the drainage from this area connected into its system.

Councillor Richardson advised that he was aware of the ongoing issues relating to the poor condition of the road surfaces, edges, and potholes to roads in the Parish. He reported that there was a new Area Highways Manager at WSCC and he would be raising the issues with them. Certain surface dressing works which had been scheduled had been put on hold due to the road closure at Midhurst. There had also been a difficulty in getting permissions for road closures in areas where the same roads required works to be undertaken by other contractors such as Southern Water.

Due to the increased in traffic caused by diversions some of the roads previously scheduled just for surface dressing now needed more extensive resurfacing works.

Councillor Richardson advised that it was the responsibility for utility companies such as Southern Water to repair any damage to the roads, edges and verges which they cause when undertaking works however the process of calling them back to undertake these repairs could be quite protracted.

Councillor Richardson explained that he was endeavouring at the very least to get a list of the works which were scheduled to be undertaken even if the timing for when these works taking place couldn't be advised very far in advance and was subject to variation at short notice if urgent work was necessary on other sites in the area. Members asked whether there was any more money available for works in Graffham under the redirected HS2 funding.

Budget

64/23 It was noted that the Finance Committee had met prior to the Full Parish Council Meeting to discuss the budget and precept for 2024/25 and to make proposals for resolution by Full Council at this Meeting. It had been acknowledged that whilst the level of precept had remained the same at £13,000 for the past few years there had been a requirement to spend increased amounts from general reserves to supplement the expenditure for the past few years. Members of the Finance Committee agreed the need to bring the precept back into line with the budget. It was understood that this would require a significant percentage increase to the precept requirement for 2024/25.

A draft baseline budget prepared by the Clerk and RFO had been considered. This draft budget had been modified by the Finance Committee to include a 5% increase to the Recreation Ground Grant in line with inflation. The requirement for a new website had been discussed and whilst it had been agreed that the development of this could be funded through CIL reserves an amount for the future annual website hosting of £400 was included in the budget. A further figure for property and equipment maintenance of £1000 was included e.g. for essential repairs to defibrillators.

65/23 **Resolved** that a budget of £17,500 be set for the Financial Year 2024/25.

66/23 **Resolved** that Chichester District Council be notified that the precept requirement for Graffham Parish Council for the Financial Year 2024/25 would be £17,500.

Finance and Governance

67/23 The payments and receipts to end December 2023 were noted. None of these payments were in excess of £500.

Katherine Muid Guillord Fund

68/23 A report was received from the Chairman of the Finance Committee, Gillian Charlesworth, in respect of the Katherine Muid Guillord Fund who had been progressing gaining access to the KMGF bank account on behalf of the Parish Council. Account access is necessary in order to enable the distribution of payments and to make the necessary return to the Charity Commission by the end of January 2024.

It was noted that the first step in gaining access to the account was to pass a resolution of the KMGF trustees (ie All members of the Parish Council) in a meeting minuted as a meeting of trustees. Once this resolution was confirmed to the Bank, the Bank will make necessary checks on the proposed signatories. It was noted that it might be necessary to make an interim return to the Charities Commission if access had still not been facilitated by the end of January.

69/23 **Resolved** that a banking mandate will be maintained with National Westminster Bank Plc (the Bank) in accordance with this mandate and that:

- The individuals identified as Authorised Signatories (Roger Coakes, Gillian Charlesworth and Caroline Davison) may in accordance with the Signing Rules in the 'About your request' section of the Bank's mandate form:
 - Sign cheques and give instructions for Standing Orders, Direct Debits, electronic payments, banker's drafts and other payments on the accounts even if it causes an account to be overdrawn or exceed any limit
 - Sign, accept or endorse bills of exchange

- Request and give counter-indemnities for the issue of letters of credit or Guarantees (including bonds, indemnities and undertakings)
- Authorised Signatories identified in the Signing Rules for unlimited amounts may, in accordance with the Signing Rules:
 - Sign facility agreements for overdrafts or the issue of letters of credit or Guarantees
 - Sign agreements for electronic products, including payments systems and appoint or remove administrators and operators of those electronic products. The Business/Organisation authorises administrators and operators to exercise the powers detailed in the terms of each electronic product. These powers may be extensive and include the power to make payments and to access information on behalf of the Business/Organisation and in the case of administrators, the power to appoint and remove other administrators (with the same powers) and operators.
- Any Authorised Signatory may give instructions or requests for information to the Bank in relation to the accounts, opening accounts with the same Signing Rules and Authorised Signatories: or other banking services or products.
- The Bank may accept instructions that do not have an original written signature provided the Bank is satisfied that the instruction is genuine. Acceptance will be subject to any other agreement the Bank may require for those instructions.
- The mandate will continue until the Customer completes a new mandate/passes and new Authority advising the changes in authority on the accounts

CIL Projects

70/23 It was noted that the CIL Annual Monitoring Report 2022/23 had been submitted at the end of December and has been published on the website.

71/23 Councillor John Bracey expressed his resistance to the installation of a new noticeboard at Selham. It was his opinion that amongst the existing noticeboards the only useful one was outside the Empire Hall. It was determined to carry forward final decision regarding support with the funding of a noticeboard at Selham using CIL funding to the next Full Parish Council Meeting to be held on 6 March 2024.

72/23 It was noted that the costs of a new website were being researched and a report would be delivered for Full Parish Council Meeting to be held on 6 March 2024.

Planning Applications and Decisions

73/23 There were no new planning applications.

74/23 The following planning decisions were noted:

- a) The main development proposed at Tangletrees, The Street SDNP/23/00373/FUL had been **REFUSED**.
Planning Application Tangletrees, The Street SDNP/23/03708/LDE had been **WITHDRAWN**.
- b) SDNP/23/03780/HOUS Nampara, The Street. Single storey side and rear extension. Replacement porch. Removal of bay window to be replaced with sash. Demolition of existing garage (flint wall retained) and erection of a replacement garage. Annex conversion.

APPROVED

- c) SDNP/03708/HOUS Down House, The Street. Single storey side and rear extension. Replacement porch. Removal of bay window to be replaced with sash. Demolition of existing garage (flint wall retained) and erection of a replacement garage. Annex conversion. This was discussed at a Planning meeting on 4th October

and our comments were sent to the Planning Department on 9th October. They have not been put on the website. Since that meeting a single storey garage has been added to this application following the refusal of SDNP/23/01693/HOUS being a two storey garage.

APPROVED

- d) Planning Application SDNP/23/0330/LDP The Folly, Graffham Common Road had been **WITHDRAWN**.

Correspondence

75/23 There was nothing to consider for this meeting.

Reports

76/23 No further reports were received from Councillors.

Parish Matters

77/23 Rights of Way and Highways

Ongoing issues with Footpath 985 were raised. As mentioned previously in the Meeting, an inspection was being undertaken by WSCC of all the Rights of Way in the Parish. It was agreed that a list of those of particular concern to the Parish would be compiled and forwarded before the inspection. The Clerk to liaise with Councillor Joanna Morris.

78/23 Recreation Ground

It was reported that:

- The painting of the new cladding at the Pavilion was still requiring to be undertaken when weather permits.
- It was hoped that permissions would be received to install fibre broadband.
- Repairs to the space net had been arranged through a local contractor and would be funded through Recreation Ground reserves.
- Councillor John Bracey was due to have a meeting about the potential location of a new pickleboard/paddleboard/tennis court.
- It was suggested at this Meeting that maybe a Boules pitch might be also considered.

79/23 Empire Hall

There was nothing further to report under this Agenda item.

80/23 Selham and Ambersham

It was opined that it would be positive if the Parish Council was able to get a representative from Selham onto the Parish Council and it was hoped that someone might put their name forward to fill the current vacancy.

81/23 Environment

Councillor Colin Barker was absent from the Meeting .

82/23 Councillor John Bracey stated that in his opinion the parishes of East Lavington and Graffham should be amalgamated. It was agreed that the Clerk would research in general principle the legal position, processes and logistics relating to the merger of parish councils.

Agenda Items for Next Meetings

83/23 The following items were identified:

- CIL
- Selham Noticeboard
- Governance Documents and Policies

Date of Next Meeting

84/23 It was noted that the next meeting is scheduled to be held on Wednesday 6 March 2024.

Meeting ended at 8.20pm

Signed Chairman of Graffham Parish Council

Dated

Appendix

Graffham Parish Council

Full Parish Council Meeting

10 January 2024

Agenda Item 6 Public Participation/Agenda Item 15 iii) Parish Matters

Our main area of activity continues to be the hall roof. Following a report in October 2023 from our building surveyor, Fildes Roofing from Bognor are booked to do some retiling work in early spring, the expected date still awaited.

The surveyor report noted that there are a few tiles which need replacing on the South and end elevations of the hall roof, which are not concerning, but the area of concern is on the north elevation, which is next to no. 2 Kelseys' drive. The drive and the land ('the access strip') which abuts the north side of the hall all belongs to Mr and Mrs Moreton of 2 Kelseys.

The surveyor reported that on the north elevation there is a patch of tiles which have flaked and shattered, falling in on each other, and which requires urgent investigation and attention to stop ingress of water into the hall. At the time of the survey in the autumn there was no water ingress into the attic of the hall.

To carry out the necessary works it is necessary to have access to and construct scaffolding on the access strip and as we have no rights to do so we have requested consent from Mr & Mrs Moreton. Mr Moreton wishes to deal with this formally and is having a licence for access prepared which we need to be available to the hall before work can commence on the roof, hopefully in early March.

Scaffolding will be positioned between the fence and the hall wall on the north side, avoiding any intrusion into the Moretons' drive. The work is expected to take only a few days unless further problems are found. This includes the erection of the scaffolding, which will be dismantled on the north side as soon as work is finished.

I have recently reminded Mr. Moreton of the urgency of supplying his licence and he assures me work is in hand from his legal advisors but he was unable to meet my request to have it ready for this meeting. However, I have requested the licence be available to the hall committee at their meeting on the 18th January. Mr. Moreton in his last email has said he will be following up with his legal advisors now he realises the arrival of the roofers is fairly imminent. Following our meeting if the licence is not yet to hand I will be asking Mr. Moreton for an update regarding his licence to necessitate the work to take place.

Three more things to add to my report:

- The fire service will be updating our risk assessment this week.
- Installation of the new AV equipment is now expected next month.
- It would be most useful if the Council would elect a representative for the Hall Committee at some point.

Sally Blunt

9 January 2024

Graffham Parish Council

Full Parish Council Meeting

10 January 2024

Agenda Item 10i) and ii) Finance and Governance

December Payments

| Date | Name | Detail | Amount £ |
|----------|-----------------------------|---------------------|-------------|
| 27/12/23 | Chichester District Council | Election Expenses | 248.00 |
| 27/12/23 | DM Payroll Services Ltd | Payroll Expenses | 60.00 |
| 27/12/23 | Norwood Contractors | Grounds Maintenance | £180.00 |

Agenda Item 11 Kathleen Maud Guillod Fund

Report on Kathleen Maud Guillod Fund to meeting of Trustees on Wednesday 10 January 2024

An outstanding finance matter is to gain access to the KMGF bank account, find out how much fund interest we have to distribute and then distribute to the Graffham Health Association and the Thursday Club. We also need to make a return to the Charity Commission by the end of January.

The first step in gaining access to the account is to pass a resolution of the KMGF trustees (ie. All members of the Parish Council in a meeting minuted as a meeting of trustees) as follows:

“It was resolved that a banking relationship will be maintained with National Westminster Bank Plc (the Bank) in accordance with this mandate and that:

- • The individuals identified as Authorised Signatories (Roger Coakes, Gillian Charlesworth and Caroline Davidson) may in accordance with the Signing Rules in the ‘About Your request’ section of the Bank’s mandate form:
 - o Sign cheques and give instructions for Standing Orders, Direct Debits, electronic payments, banker’s drafts and other payments on the accounts even if it causes an account to be overdrawn or exceed any limit
 - o Sign, accept or endorse bills of exchange
 - o Request and give counter-indemnities for the issue of letters of credit or Guarantees (including bonds, indemnities and undertakings)
- • Authorised Signatories identified in the Signing Rules for unlimited amounts may, in accordance with the Signing Rules:
 - o Sign facility agreements for overdrafts or the issue of letters of credit or Guarantees
 - o Sign agreements for electronic products, including payments systems, and appoint or remove administrators and operators of those electronic products. The Business/Organisation authorises administrators and operators to exercise the powers detailed in the terms of each electronic product. These powers may be extensive and include the power to make payments and access information on behalf of the Business/Organisation and in the case of administrators, the power to appoint and remove other administrators (with the same powers) and operators.
- • Any Authorised Signatory may give instructions or requests for information to the Bank in relation to the accounts; opening accounts with the same Signing Rules and Authorised Signatories; or other banking services or products
- • The Bank may accept instructions that do not have an original written signature provided the Bank is satisfied that the instruction is genuine. Acceptance will be subject to any other agreement the bank may require for those instructions
- • The mandate will continue until the Customer completes a new mandate/passes and new Authority advising the changes in authority on the account(s).”

Assuming it is passed, as soon as possible after the meeting, this resolution needs to be minuted and confirmed to the Bank, following which they will make checks on the proposed signatories. We may need to make an interim return to the Charity Commission if this takes a while.

Gillian Charlesworth
Councillor and Chair of Finance Committee

8 January 2024

Graffham Parish Council

Full Parish Council Meeting

10 January 2024

Agenda Item 13 i) and ii) Planning Decisions

i) There are no planning applications.

ii) To note the SDNP planning decisions made since last meeting.

- a) The main development proposed at Tangletrees, The Street SDNP/23/00373/FUL has been REFUSED.

Planning Application Tangletrees, The Street SDNP/23/03708/LDE has been WITHDRAWN.

- b) SDNP/23/03780/HOUS Nampara, The Street. Single storey side and rear extension. Replacement porch. Removal of bay window to be replaced with sash. Demolition of existing garage (flint wall retained) and erection of a replacement garage. Annex conversion.

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- d) Planning Application SDNP/23/0330/LDP The Folly, Graffham Common Road has been WITHDRAWN.