

GRETTON PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Meeting held in the Village Hall on Monday 9th May 2016 at 7.30pm

Present:- Andrew Royle – chair, Tim Fox, Marshall Ferguson, Matthew Moore, Phil Bromhall, Julie Smith, Frances Woolston, Terri Meechan, Suzanne Preston – Rural Pride Officer, PC Mark Walker – Corby Police, John Hindle – clerk, Rob McKellar and Kevin Watt (BC) from 8.30pm and 10 Members of the Public.

Apologies:- Mark Thompson, Bridget Watts (BC)

Chairman remarked that Mark had cited pressure of other commitments which led to his apology and these were being addressed.

Chairman reminded councillors to declare an interest where appropriate.

The Minutes of the Meeting held on 11th April 2016 were declared a true record and duly signed by the chairman.

Meeting open to the Public

A large group of village bus users were again in attendance to seek an update on the progress of negotiations with Northants CC. Chairman explained that he had entered into an exchange of emails with M. Clarke the Cabinet member responsible for bus services at County. On 26th April Mr Clarke had intimated that in his opinion he would be able to put something on the table for consideration. Tom Pursglove MP is also involved in the discussions and has asked that Northants County chief executive review the case and report his findings.

Chairman informed the Meeting that as yet he had not received a response from our Borough Councillors as to any funding which may be forthcoming from Corby BC. In addition there was the question of the transport of school children who used the early bus in term time and would have to be catered for should the service cease. There is no doubt of course that as the transport of children is a statutory obligation funds would be found from a different budget. In discussion the redirection of the Rutland Flyer was mooted along with the possible addition of a County Connect service where villagers could order a bus at particular times. Chairman was thanked for all his efforts from the floor and responded with thanks to all who had attended and the interest shown in this time of uncertainty. He promised to email Cllr Clarke with the points raised from this Meeting.

Elisabeth Jordan informed councillors that there was a tiny group of dog owners in the village who were determined not to clean up after their dogs. She explained that dog fouling notices which had been put up in the Pocket Park had been removed by walkers. This initiative was followed by the introduction of Perspex notices which have remained in place.

Mrs. Jordan asked P.C. Walker if any action had been taken over speeding vehicles leaving the village on Corby Road. His response was to inform councillors that the speed gun would be operational soon and Gretton school children would be involved as an educational exercise. Mrs. Jordan invited PC Walker to view the problem anonymously from the front window of her property

Mrs. Jordan also informed councillors that the service to commemorate the Battle of the Somme in 1916 would take place on the Village Green on Thursday 30th June at 9pm. Parish Council will be represented and chairman requested a substitute as he will be away.

Report from Police:-

PC Mark Walker introduced himself as the Police contact for the villages working alongside the PCSOs. He stated that Northamptonshire now had a new Police Commissioner recently voted into office and time would tell as to his plans for the Force.

Chairman informed Mark that public confidence in the Police was quite low at present due to the lack of response from PCSOs, 101 and in some cases 999 calls. In addition emails had lain unanswered for days at a time. Two recent incidents had borne this out namely that Clay Lane had been used as a two way road during the closure of Station Road and an unruly alsatian dog on Hunts Field Drive had been dealt with by a Neighbourhood Warden. Mark promised that any correspondence addressed to him would be dealt with speedily.

Report from Rural Pride Officer:-

Suzanne Preston passed a new anti dog fouling poster to Phil Bromhall for use in Church Gap.

Tesco are offering grants for projects in parks, woodlands and churchyards etc. Any area which would benefit is invited to apply. Phil Bromhall will assess a need in Church Gap. The sums are in the order of £8, 10, 12,000 per venture.

The Park and Stride initiative encouraging pupils to walk to school is being introduced at Gretton School and Suzanne would like it to be on a monthly basis to help to alleviate parking issues around School.

The new Neighbourhood Wardens in the rural area are Karen and Olivia and this situation should not change in the foreseeable future allowing residents to get to know them.

Councillor discussed the condition of the litter bins around the village and Suzanne confirmed that there was little funding available for the provision of new bins. An option is for Council to purchase one or two bins which would be emptied by Corby BC and this will be discussed at a later date.

The initiative by Gretton Garden group to decorate troughs at the entrances to the village has been referred to NCC Highways. On receipt of their report it will be decided what may be possible.

Suzanne promised to chase a defective streetlight report which is still unanswered after three months.

Councillors asked Suzanne to use her influence in the ongoing saga of the Balancing pond in Huntsfield Drive. Amy Plank at Corby BC has informed chairman that the specification of the proposed fencing works has changed which resulted in the preferred contractor pulling out of the job and the budget increasing to £10,000. It is expected that planning permission may be required but this may be avoided because of the safety issues involved in the site.

Despite many promises no proper cleaning of the pond is undertaken on a regular basis; there are still toys and plastic strewn around and the depth of the water is incredibly dangerous to young children of which there are many living close by. It was agreed that should in excess

of seven days elapse before Suzanne is able to report a formal complaint would be sent to Corby BC.

Matters Arising from Minutes of 11th April:-

The damaged branch on the oak tree on the Village Green is still awaiting removal despite repeated requests to the contractor. Clerk will keep trying to elicit a response.

The drainage problems at the top of Lyddington Road and the building site by Hatton Lane are continuing. NCC Highways officers were observed on site on 20th April so it is hoped that the escape of water will be fixed soon.

The old phone box will be repainted and a contractor engaged in the next week .

One of the benches on the Village Green needs replacing and chairman will ask villagers if there is a demand for a resident memorial bench to be installed. There may be sponsorship available in the village under the guidance of the PC.

The fence between the Doctor's surgery and the Sports Club has now been repaired and councillors will consider the next step required in creating a secure area.

Chairman is concerned about the apparent lack of response from villagers regarding the formation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Gretton. Attendees at the meeting in March were invited to formulate questions for submission to Terry Begley in Planning Dept. Little has been forthcoming. During discussion Kevin Watt and Rob McKellar agreed to talk with Planning officers and possibly engage the services of an officer from another authority with experience in this area to come to address a meeting.

Clerk has been in contact with ACRE regarding the provision of permanent signs for directions to the Village Hall. In discussions he has been directed to officers at Northants Highways and a report will be produced soon.

Terri Meechan will invite the School Head Mrs. Macdonald to a future meeting of PC.

The recent correspondence relating to the parking of a vehicle on the pavement at the end of Corby Road has been filed. Councillors consider this to be a Police matter and any complaints should be addressed to local officers.

No improvement has been observed in the parking of vehicles on the verge opposite the entrance to Gretton House. Chairman will discuss with Northants Highways and Gretton House management.

Councillors were very pleased to see a large group of villagers involved in the Litter Pick in April. A letter of thanks has been sent to Mel Jarvis for his work of organisation and co-ordination of volunteers.

Report from Borough Councillors:-

Rob Mc.Kellar apologised for his recent lack of attendance at Meetings and expected that by July work commitments would have subsided and he could be a more regular participant. Councillors have raised the bus service issue with Members and officers at Corby BC and are awaiting responses. However, the possibility of funding from Corby BC would appear remote. Rob suggested that a petition would raise the profile but this was perhaps a little premature in the light of efforts from all sides at present. Northants CC had been caught out by Centrebus's decision to withdraw the service and officers are now engaged in producing an alternative.

It is likely that Unitary Authorities will be in position by 2020 and North Northamptonshire will cover the areas of Corby, Kettering, Wellingborough and East Northants. Discussions on sharing services are well under way at the behest of the government. This situation could make the formation of a Neighbourhood Plan for Gretton all the more important as we will be controlled from much further afield.

The contract with Kier Services for waste disposal will either be extended or brought 'in house' or put out to tender with other contractors invited to display an interest.

Correspondence:-

Letter from Ian Preston suggesting the phone box could hold items of memorabilia from residents who have recently died. Clerk to discuss with Ian as to the feasibility of this idea and whether it is wanted by villagers.

Circulation:-

Northants 50+ Magazine
Clerks and Councils DIRECT Magazine
Augean Newsletter

Report on Recreation Ground:-

Tim Fox announced that the Family Funday would take place on Sunday 17th July with the usual features of bouncy castle, bugtopia and various stalls. It is hoped that the Gretton Pram Race will run around the borders of the Recreation field.

Jayne McGregor has been appointed cleaner for the Pavilion.

There are problems with the plumbing and showers at the Pavilion. A meeting with Mark Thompson has been arranged for next week. Tim requested that this was added to Matters Arising so a check can be put on progress.

A company called Shared Access has been in touch to discuss the possibility of siting a communications mast on the Recreation Ground. This would yield a sum of money for use on facilities.

Planning:-

16/00128/DPA 10 x 6 summer house at 71a High Street

No objections were raised to this proposal

Finance:-

Current balance	£16,374.79
Amounts owing:-	
Anglian Water – metered water at Rec. Ground	34.58
Jayne McGregor – cleaning at Pavilion	72.00
JJ Heating and Plumbing – work on showers at Pavilion	280.00
Pat Butler Elec. Ltd – Electrical work at Pavilion	579.00

The annual governance statement and accounts for year ended 31st March 2016 were approved and duly signed by the chairman

Any Other Business:-

A concerned villager has offered to clean out the wells at the top of Clay Lane. This is gratefully accepted by councillors.

Mel Jarvis will cease to edit the Village Newsletter after the end of this calendar year. It is hoped that the publication will continue under the guidance of another editor and councillors will report possibilities in due course.

Date of next Meeting to be Monday 13th June at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.