

Greatham Parish Council
Minutes of Parish Council Meeting
held on Wednesday 14th February 2024, 7.30pm

Present Cllr R Lafferty (Chair), Cllr C Rudd, Cllr A Cheesman, Cllr S Pond, Cllr SJ Bartlett (acting as temporary clerk)

Also present : 4 residents

24.15 Chairman's Announcements : The phone box project is nearing completion. The plinth is in position, just waiting on D. Redmond to have a window to deliver the telephone box to the Village hall and position. It is then necessary to add a concrete floor.

The Chair would also like to thank Tina Snelling for her very kind gesture of bringing cakes to the meeting to celebrate Valentines day. They were enjoyed by all.

24.16 Apologies for Absence : Cllr Oppenheimer, Cllr Mitchell and Cllr Steevens.

24.17 Declarations of Interest : None

24.18 Approval of Minutes : It was **RESOLVED** to approve the minutes from the Parish Council Meeting held on the 17th January 2024.

24.19 Matters arising from last council meeting:

Cllr Oppenheimer has responded to a number of questions posed to him :

1. There is a process for requesting additional streetlighting. HCC recognizes that this is sometimes necessary. If you look at this page on the website (towards the bottom of the page) you will find that there is an email address there. So I would recommend that you send a message to that email address with a very precise location and clear summary of the reasons for the request. I find it is helpful to send a Google maps link AND a what 3 words location too.
<https://www.hants.gov.uk/transport/roadmaintenance/streetlighting/streetlightmaintenance>
2. The A3 slip roads and exit roads are managed by National Highways as they are part of their network. You can report problems via the National Highways website. Or you could write a letter to their Chief Exec. They may agree to place a flashing SLOW sign at the exit. I doubt that they will agree to re-design it though.
3. Thanks for the kind invitation re: 13 April. Unfortunately I am going to be in Crete on a cycling holiday that day. Sorry that I cannot join you and hope it goes well.

It was pointed out that the 300 yard marker is missing from the slip road exit on the A3 and might help with slowing traffic to take the exit. The clerk will follow up with requesting this is replaced.

The Lengthsmen worked on the footpath reported with fallen trees and created a raft to allow a passing place where the area was water logged.

Cllr Lafferty has accepted that the Longmoor bridge could do with some repair work, and safety could be an issue. He will look into what can be done.

24.20 Report from District Councillors :

Cllr Mitchell and Cllr Steevens were not able to attend the meeting, so a written report was provided. Noted as Appendix 2.

A meeting was arranged by Cllr Mitchell, also attended by Cllr Bartlett, with the Headmistress of Greatham Primary School to discuss the parking issues in in the village.

The District councillor report mentions water recycling initiatives, which the parish councillors felt needed further information and explanation. The clerk will request more details.

The Parish council wish to acknowledge the support, and thank both Cllr Mitchell and Cllr Steevens for the grant funding that the village has received, it has enabled the playground to have additional equipment giving a well rounded range of equipment.

24.21 Report from County Councillor :

Cllr Oppenheimer was not able to attend the meeting, so a written report was provided. Noted as Appendix 3.

Cllr Lafferty will investigate if HCC can do any work at Longmoor Rd river as part of their storm drain clearance works.

Cllr Oppenheimer mentions that HCC have approved a new policy on 20 mph areas. It was felt that the parish council needs to discuss this in detail at a future meeting.

24.22 The Chair adjourned the meeting for public questions:

A resident asked about how the grass verges in the village might be protected from the inconsiderate parking of parents dropping off and picking up children attending Greatham Primary School. Some residents have been using stones or pieces of wood to deter parking outside of their homes. Cllr Bartlett advised that a meeting was planned to discuss this with the school. As a word of warning, it is understood that if a vehicle is damaged by these obstacles it is the home owner who is liable for the repair costs.

A resident commented on how nice it was to see the wildflowers re-appearing on the liss nursery bank, and congratulated the grass cutting team on doing a good job to facilitate this being possible.

Footpath 10 needs maintenance. It is being used by Horses as well as walkers. A bridle path is needed to give Horse access to the MOD land alongside the Apple Pie Depot. Cllr Bartlett will make enquiries with the MOD regarding options and possible works.

A resident commented that the River is very fast flowing at the moment, and safety could be an issue. The council will look at Signage, providing a life ring, and a grate to protect the entrance to the culvert under the road.

Meeting reconvened

24.23 Parish Council Finances / Administration :

- a) **Clerk's report** : see appendix 4
- b) **Finance Report** : see appendix 5.
- c) **Payment schedule** : see appendix 6. It was **RESOLVED** to approve the payment schedule, **proposed by Cllr Lafferty and seconded by Cllr Cheesman.**

24.24 Playground. It was **RESOLVED** that the balance of funding required to complete the playground of £1928.57 be funded by the parish council. **Proposed by Cllr Cheesman and seconded by Cllr Rudd.**

The Playground construction will be started on 19th February 2024, and is anticipated to be completed w/c 25th March 2024. The official opening event will be held on April 13th 2024, and will coincide with the Parish Council Annual Meeting.

24.25 Grants : It was **RESOLVED** to support the GVEC grant request of £1000.00 for the summer festival event. **Proposed by Cllr Lafferty and seconded by Cllr Cheesman. The vote to approve was unanimous.** Discussion regarding the zip wire concluded that this is an asset of the parish council and as such we are responsible for its maintenance. It was agreed that we will seek grant funding in the next financial year to carry out necessary improvements.

24.26 Working Group Terms of Reference : A meeting is still being planned to discuss the terms of reference for the new working group looking at the Parish Priority statement. It was **RESOLVED** that all other working groups be disbanded, as with a small group of councillors all council matters are being discussed in the Council meetings. **Proposed by Cllr Cheesman and seconded by Cllr Pond. The vote was unanimous.**

24.27 Planning and TPO Applications : None received. Cllr Pond gave an update on the outstanding planning applications that are with the relevant planning authorities. A notice has been served on 1 Hill View as they have started demolition of buildings without having the necessary approval in place.

24.28 Grass Cutting : We are still trying to obtain 3 quotes for the grass cutting within the village. It was **RESOLVED** to ask the lengthsman company RP Commercial Services to carry out a one-off cut in March 2024. The cost will be £490.00. **Proposed by Cllr Pond and seconded by Cllr Lafferty. The vote was unanimous.**

24.29 Defibrillators : The two newly funded defibrillators have arrived and will be in position by early March 2024. **One will be sited at St Johns Church.** It will be at the back of the Church alongside the Church Room doors. Enhanced lighting will be provided by Cllr Lafferty to ensure there is a well lit pathway to access the defibrillator. **The second will be sited at Eurotec.** It will be under their name sign and alongside the EV charging point. This gives good visibility and also parking. The Parish council are very grateful to Eurotec, and wish to thank them, for their support, and for funding the electrical supply and ongoing power to this unit.

The unit already in position at the Village Hall will be checked and the Circuit updated.

24.30 Items for next Agenda :

Annual Meeting

24.28 Date of Next Meeting : Wednesday March 13th 2024, at 7.30 pm

The meeting closed at 9.05 pm

Signed (Chairman)

Date

Appendix 1 : Previous Meeting actions arising

- Meeting date being co-ordinated for setting terms of reference for parish statement working group. Further discussions and information received from Mr Jerrard regarding Liss terms of reference.
- The clerk has been in contact with Cllr Oppenheimer regarding a number of items where his input has been requested and is waiting a response on when these can be discussed.
- The maintenance of the footpaths is being addressed with the Lengthsman. Footpath 14 was focused on in February as a number of fallen trees had made it virtually impassable. Footpath 9 will be the next to be reviewed.

- The clerk has contacted the environmental agency and discussed the issues with the river under the bridge at the junction of Longmoor and Petersfield Roads. It is a Hampshire County council issue and they have also been contacted.
- The parking at Bakers Field is an ongoing issue where funding is required. This will be reviewed in 2024.

Appendix 2 : Report from the District Councillors

We had the meeting at the school towards the end of February and I believe you were going to put together an agenda. I think that, as we cannot really promote a car share, it would be good to look at more regulated parking and the option of a minibus?

The Apple Pie have finally sorted their electric feed and will be ready to go in the next couple of weeks. It will not take long to build and will bring about 300 jobs to the community.

We have also been on a meeting about the water in the area which was looking at recycling water. We are not sure how well this will be received, and there is nothing definite as yet, but we will keep you posted on that.

The Local Plan is online so please do encourage people to take a look - we don't think it will increase the number of new builds in Greatham, but it may increase some traffic to the area.

Mike and I have now used up all of our councillor budget, which we are pleased to say, the majority of which went to Greatham. We used the final bits on the playground equipment. We will have new funds in March so if there is anything else coming up which would fit the criteria, please do let us now and get the applications in.

Appendix 3 : Report from our County Councillor

COUNTY COUNCILLOR REPORT TO ALL PARISH COUNCILS IN PETERSFIELD HANGERS 1 FEBRUARY 2024

1. Highways update and weather impacts

Hampshire Highways coped well with a difficult month in January due to the high number of storms. The teams have been on virtually constant duty clearing fallen trees and branches. Ground water is also 5 metres higher than usual at this time of year which has led to a surge of flooding issues. The seasonal challenges are not interfering with routine maintenance thanks to pre-emptive

work clearing gullies and storm drains. I am extremely grateful to the Highways teams for their dedication and professionalism in difficult conditions.

Luckily the two-week cold snap in January did not coincide with rainfall. We have not seen the same weather pattern as last year which involved heavy rain followed by overnight freezing, and which led to a surge in road defects. I am hopeful that we are past the worst now this year and that the overnight temperatures will remain above zero as we head into the Spring. Time will tell if I am being overly optimistic!

2. New 20mph policy approved at HCC

At his Decision Day on 15 January, Executive Lead Member for Universal Services Cllr Nick Adams-King approved a new policy on 20mph speed limits. The development of this policy followed a review by the Select Committee. The Decision report, including the new Position Statement, can be read at this link:

<https://democracy.hants.gov.uk/documents/s115742/Report.pdf>

A process whereby Parish Councils can nominate their area for consideration will be in place on the hants.gov.uk website by April 2024. This helpfully gives some time for Parish Councils to consider formally whether this is something they want to do.

3. Hampshire Forest Partnership update

The Hampshire Forest Partnership is having a busy planting season. So far, we have planted 24,300 trees and hedges which is more than double what we achieved in our first year. We have an ambition to plant one million trees by 2050 and so we are determined to keep building each year. I would like to highlight two exciting opportunities to work with the Hampshire Forest Partnership:

- **Free Elm Trees available!** We have purchased 700 disease-resistant elms and we are still looking for homes for about 600 of them. Please help us by coming forward with a request for up to 20 Elm trees in your patch! The English countryside was once dominated by elms, but since the 1960s these trees have been ravaged by Dutch elm disease, accidentally introduced to Europe in the early 20th century. The Hampshire Forest Partnership with support from The Tree Council are funding disease resistant hybrid elm trees to help local nature recovery. Selective breeding of elms now means that we can bring these back to Hampshire; trials have shown that these hybrids show resistance to the disease and also support our native wildlife. We are particularly interested to plant the trees within hedges, in community spaces and as specimens in areas that have lost trees from ash dieback.
- **Shoots along the Routes** scheme seeks more projects. This scheme aims to improve landscape connectivity outside woodland areas. We'll be providing free trees to landowners and land managers to create over 630km of new green networks across the county. These networks will follow the routes of several A and B-roads across

Hampshire. The scheme will also support eligible tree planting schemes within a 2km wide corridor along the routes to boost nature recovery.

If you are interested in proposing a location for either of the above, please email treeplanting@hants.gov.uk. And by the way, it is the same email address for Community Orchards and Mini Forests! We have funding for both so we can provide trees, stakes, guards and even information panels.

4. Ashford Hangers: closure of contour path

It has regrettably become necessary to close the contour path (also known as the middle path) at the Ashford Hangers National Nature Reserve. I went up there last week with Pete and Hazel from the Countryside Service to see the situation for myself.

At this time, the path is incredibly dangerous due to fallen trees and surface damage to the path caused by uprooted trees and erosion.

These two photos illustrate the issues:



The steep slope means that anyone who falls could potentially end up falling quite a long way down. And we all know that the chalk and clay get slippery. I have therefore agreed that HCC has to take the difficult decision to close the path. HCC is the owner of the land and so we have extra responsibility for safety here. We have a duty of care to ensure that people do not access dangerous parts of the site. The closure of the contour path will come into effect from 2 February 2024. I would strongly encourage people not to side-step the closure. It is really not safe.

I would like to explain that the contour path is a “permissive path” – it is not a formal Right of Way and so does not appear on the definitive map. The bridleway along the bottom will remain open, and the permissive path across the top will also remain open.

The cost of removing fallen trees and removing trees which pose a clear threat to the contour path has been estimated at £40,000. The cost of resurfacing the path is unknown. It may be difficult to find a contractor willing to undertake the work, as there is no vehicular access. HCC will explore the costs further and see what funding may be available from partners. The

Countryside Service is facing budget cuts and does not have funding available in-house, so external funding will be required.

I realise that the Ashford Hangers is a much-used and much-loved site and that many people will be disappointed by the situation. I give my commitment that I will continue to work with the Countryside Team and with all key stakeholders to try to find a way to get the path made safe and re-opened, however long it takes. Finally I am pleased to report that this Summer HCC will reconstitute the Ashford Hangers Consultative Committee and we will invite local representatives to attend a meeting in June.

5. Future Services Consultation

As mentioned in my January report, HCC commenced a consultation on 8 January about possible service changes which are needed to bridge our budget gap of £132m.

I would like to stress that no decisions have been made yet. The consultation is designed to garner views from the public and elected representatives. The responses will then inform the decision-making process. In my experience, HCC is genuinely good at consultations (unlike some public bodies). All responses will be carefully analysed by the Insights and Engagement Team and the HCC Cabinet will meet to discuss the analysis. Parish Council responses will be grouped, so I

would encourage Parish Councils to submit a collective Parish Council response. Councillors can also then submit their individual responses.

The consultation questionnaire at this link must be completed by 31 March 2024:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/aboutthecouncil/haveyoursay/consultations/future-services-consultation>

You may have seen that the Government announced on 24 January £500m of extra funding for social care. We believe that Hampshire will receive about £10m of this which is very welcome. It is not enough to fix our budget problems but it certainly makes it a bit easier for HCC to bridge the gap through the use of reserves.

6. Dark Skies Festival gets underway

In February the South Downs Dark Skies Festival gets underway, celebrating our National Park status as an International Dark Skies Reserve. There is an early evening event taking place at QE Country Park on 15 February called Walk the Planets, where the planets will be laid out to scale and stargazing through telescopes will be happening. Please help us to spread the word about this! You can book tickets at this link:

<https://www.hants.gov.uk/thingstodo/countryparks/qecp/visit-us/whatson/SDNPA-dark-skies-2024>

The SDNPA page which lists all the events during the Festival can be found here:

<https://www.southdowns.gov.uk/dark-night-skies/dark-skies-festival/>

Let's hope we get some clear skies so that we can all enjoy looking up at the stars.

RUSSELL OPPENHEIMER
County Councillor for Petersfield Hangers

Appendix 4 : Clerks Report

- Focus this month has been on the financial side of the role. Meeting with internal auditor ensured all key dates for the year end have been planned. Complete review of all processes took place with a couple of tweaks to be put in place.
- Attended the Meet the Funders event organised by EHDC which proved very informative. Fully aware of possible funding streams available to the council for 2024 projects and beyond. Plan to be put in place for some longer term projects to be managed by the Parish council.
- Applied for the Councillor funding available from Cllr Mitchell and Cllr Steevens to support the additional items required for the full list of playground equipment. Including updating the financial data to receive a bit more funding than expected.
- Applied for the CIL funding to all the playground build to go ahead, including several calls to the SDNP to discuss their requirements and provision of necessary paperwork to back up application.
- Negotiated with Sawscapes the payment of the deposit amount required to start the playground build, to allow for funding to be provided in stages as available in the Parish council bank account.
- Attended the EHDC Chairman's Civic service in Petersfield with Cllr Sally Pond, as her guest.

Appendix 5 : Financial Report

The Financial records as at 31st January 2024 are as follows :

Receipts 1st January to 31st January 2024

Total Receipts **£10,165.71**

Balances as at 31st January 2024

Current Account £31,199.08

Deposit Account £30,923.13

Total at Bank **£62,122.21**

Earmarked Funds Held

Trees £ 900.00

Community Engagement £ 0

Elections £3500.00

CIL + £2K grants (old church repair) £1720.00

Telephone Box £ 410.00

King's Coronation £ 0

Total Earmarked Funds **£6530.00**

General Reserves Balance **£55,592.21 (Total at Bank less Earmarked funds)**

Appendix 6 : Payment Schedule

Invoice Date	Payee	Description	Net Total	Vat	Total
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25/01/2024	Sawscapes play limited	Deposit of 50% against Q003216 total value £109,000 + vat	£54,500.00	£10,900.00	£65,400.00
08/02/2024	Greatham village hall	Hall booking	£12.38	0.00	£12.38
	Reg white	Graveyard maintenance	168.00	0	168.00
06/02/2024	B&Q Black Type 171 letterbox	New GPC post box at Village Hall – expensed by R.Lafferty	£28.42	£7.10	£35.52
10/12/2023	GL White	Building base for telephone Box	£229.00	£0.00	£229.00
	Giff Gaff Phone	Expensed by SJB for Nov – Jan inclusive	£15.00	£3.00	£18.00
31/12/2023	Hexius	24 months of email accounts and storage	£409.50	£81.90	£491.40

Approved

Date

Appendix 7 : Playground Layout

