

Minutes of the meeting of Griston Parish Council held at Angelica Place on Tuesday 1st March 2016.

Attending: Malcolm Bellingham (Chairman), Stewart Southgate (Vice-Chairman), David Barnett, Tracey Johnson, Andrew Merritt-Morling, Stephanie Merritt-Morling, Malcolm Newby, Margaret Parker (Clerk) and one member of the public.

The meeting began at 7.30pm

1. Public participation: There were no questions.
2. Apologies received from: PCSO Tonya Winsley.
3. Declarations of interest: There were no declarations of interest.
4. Minutes of the meeting of 12th January 2016 were approved after an amendment was inserted that there had been no need for Mrs Merritt-Morling to declare an interest during the discussion concerning the Homewatch scheme.
5. Matters arising:
 - a) Marquee storage – As the frame of the marquee continues to stand open to the elements in the grounds of the Waggon & Horses a discussion took place about the best way to remove it. It was thought that this would require a team of people due to its size. As it was loaned to the Waggon & Horses and they were responsible for its erection it was felt that they should also be responsible for dismantling it. After further discussion it was **decided** that Mr Barnett would approach the landlord to organise this.
 - b) Bank mandates – The Clerk informed the PC that the bank has stated that all the requested changes have now been actioned.
 - c) Village sign – Mr Barnett reported that after an unexpected single generous donation of over 500 of the EDP tokens he had been able to submit an application for a grant of £1000 towards the cost of the new village sign. However, due to the enormous amount of applications that the EDP are receiving this is by no means guaranteed. He will therefore continue to collect the tokens and submit further applications if possible.
6. Police/SNAP – The December crime figures for the village showed fourteen crimes. Thirteen of which related to the prison. The January figures were not yet available. The meeting was informed that the next SNAP meeting would be held at Watton Fire Station on 30th March at 2pm.

The Chairman suggested that the road signage at the junction of Thompson Road/A1075 needs improvement as the reflective sign on the island has been knocked down several times and drivers are overshooting the junction on a regular basis. The Clerk will contact the Highways Dept. regarding this matter.
7. Correspondence – Breckland Council are currently running a competition for children to design a sign for use near schools and children's play areas. This is in relation to their promotion of 'Voluntary Smoke Free Children's Play Areas'. The PC have been asked if they would like to take part in this promotion and display one of the free signs at the recreation ground. During the discussion there was some concern about the sheer number of signs that are displayed there. It was felt that this sometimes results in none of the signs being read by the public. However, it was accepted that it was overall a good scheme and something that the PC should encourage. It was **decided** that Mr Barnett would put an article on the website to promote the competition. It was also decided that the PC should accept the offer of the free sign.
8. Planning

The Clerk reported that comments have been submitted to the planning department for the Caston Road application. Comments will also be submitted for the Church Road application when they are received back from the Councillors.

The Chairman informed the meeting that he had visited the Planning Dept. regarding the application for Lancaster Avenue. He believes that the new development and the current properties in Lancaster Avenue will eventually belong entirely to Carbrooke. This would mean a loss of approximately thirty households that are currently included in Griston's

Precept calculations. This loss of revenue will be recovered when the Quantrills site is developed.

9. Dog fouling. Mr Barnett explained that he had received some complaints about dog owners not clearing up after their dogs. One particular owner apparently just lets their dog out to be clean then lets it back in again. Another owner of two dogs allows them to defecate outside someone's property on a regular basis with no attempt made to clean it up. As it appears that the offending owners are identifiable it was **decided** that the complainants should be advised to contact the Dog Warden directly with the information. The Clerk was asked to investigate anything that the PC are able to do to improve the general situation regarding the dog fouling problem.

10. Auditors – The Clerk had received three written requests from Councillors to revisit the decision made at the previous meeting to opt out of the new audit system. It was now felt that this was an incorrect decision and it was overturned without further discussion. The **decision** was made that the external auditors will therefore be appointed by the Sector Led Body.

The **decision** was made to appoint Lynne Wellbelove as the Parish Council's internal auditor for this year.

The Clerk explained that there must be an entry in the minutes appointing her as the Proper Officer and the Responsible Financial Officer to the Parish Council.

The **decision** was made to appoint Margaret Parker as the Clerk/Proper Officer and the Responsible Financial Officer to Griston Parish Council.

The Clerk reminded the PC that as her employers they were responsible for issuing her with a contract/terms and conditions including a copy of the grievance procedures and a job description/list of duties. As the Clerk took up this post on 1st December 2015 this was now well overdue and placed the PC in a position where they were in breach of the Employment Act. The Chairman indicated that this would be dealt with soon. Mr Merritt-Morling proposed that a deadline for this should be set as the 31st March. This was **agreed** by the PC.

11. Financial:

NTPT - Training (including £45 unpaid invoice from June 2015)	£125.00
Pearce & Kemp - maintenance	£100.80
Berryman - glass collection	£7.92
Manorcourt Care - hire of room (including £24 returned cheque)	£32.00
Norfolk Constabulary - Homewatch signs	£100.00
Waveney Fencing - recreation ground gate and fencing	£1602.00
M Parker - ¼ salary to 29 th February (including travel & expenses £72.21)	£586.96

Payments previously agreed – cheques signed between meetings

M Parker - laptop and scanner (reimbursement for PC World payment)	£418.77
Giffords Recycling Ltd - Cushionfall	£170.40
Signs Express - recreation ground barbeque signs	<u>£49.79</u>
Total:	£3193.64

Receipts

Transparency Code Funding	£370.00
NCC Recycling credit	<u>£48.37</u>
Total:	£418.37

All accounts were approved for payment and cheques signed.

The Clerk confirmed that the application for the Transparency Code funding had been successful and was paid nett of VAT. When the VAT is reclaimed this covered the cost of the laptop and scanner that had now been purchased.

The Clerk provided all Councillors with a copy of February's bank reconciliation.

12. Business Planning and Objectives – The Chairman explained that Mr Merritt-Morling has been working on the idea of a type of business plan to enable the Parish Council to set down some plans for the future. Mr Merritt-Morling then explained that this plan would involve

consultation with the residents to find out how they see the future of the village. The PC would provide some basic ideas of possibilities for the residents to consider. The PC would then set some targets to aim for and be regularly measured against these to ensure some forward progression. The consultation would hopefully be able to be completed within the next three months.

During the discussion that followed some Parish Councillors expressed concern that it has previously been very difficult to encourage involvement from the residents despite website appeals and distribution of flyers etc. It was also felt by one Councillor that it would be difficult to put any timescales into the plan as they had learnt from previous experience whilst dealing with the long drawn out process of establishing the recreation ground and the cycleway. Mr Merritt-Morling explained that if the PC found that it was not meeting any of the targets because of problems outside of its control then timelines could be reviewed and the reasons for this would be made clear in the regular updates to the plan. This did not have to be seen as a failure by the PC. Mr Merritt-Morling went on to say that this would be a rolling plan. It was stated that everything that is done is made up of lots of small steps but if you never take any of these steps nothing gets done at all. Although most of the Councillors were in agreement to this idea one Councillor felt that the PC should not agree to the measurement of its objectives.

The **decision** was made that the PC should adopt this method of setting and measuring the objectives of the PC.

It was further **decided** that individual PC members will lead and/or deputise for at least one section of the plan.

It was also **decided** that the updated business planning tool be published no later than four weeks after the date of each Parish Council meeting.

13. AOB – The Clerk informed the Parish Council that the volunteer that has been removing the rubbish sacks from the recreation ground to enable collection by Breckland Council has decided to give up this role. The Clerk and her husband will now take on the role. The Clerk also informed the Parish Council that the now defunct laptop and printer were to be disposed of and removed from the list of assets. The list of assets will be reviewed and verified by the Clerk as there seemed to be some confusion about what is actually owned by the Parish Council. The Clerk asked the Councillors to email her as soon as possible with details and amounts as to what they each believed that any financial reserves were being held for. This information will assist with the completion of the end of year accounts and return. It will also help with financial plans in the future. Mrs Merritt-Morling informed the Council that roots/weeds appear to be growing through the surface on sections of Stan's Walk. The Clerk will investigate this further. Mr Merritt-Morling reminded the Councillors of his request for comments on the Wayland Partnership Draft 10 Year Action Plan.

The date of the next meeting was set for 3rd May 2016. This will be the Annual Parish Meeting followed by the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council.
The meeting closed at 9.35pm.