

Minutes of the meeting of Griston Parish Council held at Caston Village Hall on Thursday 2nd March 2017.

The meeting began at 7.30pm

Attending: David Barnett (Chairman), Takis Zachariades (Vice-Chairman), Nicky Hornsey, Tracey Johnson, Marie McGuinness, Rose Woolhouse, Margaret Parker (Clerk) and eight members of the public.

1. Public participation – A member of the public raised the subject of the contribution to be made by the Parish Council to the cost of cutting the grass in the churchyard this year. He pointed out that in previous years the full cost had been paid by the Parish Council. The Chairman explained that the Parish Council is not legally allowed to deal with the contract for maintenance of the churchyard as this is the responsibility of the Church who own it. The Parish Council is therefore unable to reclaim the VAT element of the overall cost. To ensure that the maintenance of the churchyard for the coming year does not involve more expenditure from public funds the contribution agreed in the budget had been reduced compared to last year. It was agreed that this item would be included in the agenda for further discussion at the next meeting.

A resident (A) asked that it be put on record that there was no confidence in the Chairman who it was felt did not listen to the residents and had caused a lot of ill-feeling and division within the village. There was agreement from another resident who suggested the Chairman should be removed from his post. ~~*The Chairman told him that he would be removed from the meeting if he continued with what he felt was a personal attack against him.~~

~~**Resident (A) then asked several times for an explanation of another item on the agenda regarding 'Transparency Code' funding but the Chairman told her that this was not the time for this to be discussed.~~

2. Apologies received: Councillor Hornsey relayed an apology for absence from Councillor Ginger.
3. Declarations of interest: There were no declarations of interest in any item on the agenda.
4. Minutes of the meeting of 5th January 2017 were approved without amendment.

5. Items for information:

Village Appraisal – The Clerk explained that she had managed to obtain a copy of a very old computer programme that deals with the production and analysing of village appraisals. She had had a productive meeting with the Clerk from another village that had carried out an appraisal recently and had achieved a 90% return rate. It was felt that a major factor in this success was ensuring confidentiality. All questionnaires would be totally anonymous and would be collected in sealed envelopes. The Clerk had produced a sample questionnaire that was very much a 'work in progress'. The Councillors were asked to provide some ideas of what information they felt that they would like to gain from this exercise so that suitable questions could be included. A copy of the sample questionnaire will be circulated to the Councillors shortly for their feedback.

6. Police/SNAP – The most recent available crime figures were for December which showed a total of 17 crimes for Griston, all of these were prison related. The next SNAP meeting would be held at Watton Fire Station on 29th March at 2pm. The Clerk explained that Griston is now covered by a different Safer Neighbourhood Team. Our previous PCSO (Tonya Winsley) has said that Griston residents are still welcome to attend the SNAP meetings in Watton as it is more local. She has offered to pass on any concerns that may be raised there to the new team.

Councillor Hornsey advised the meeting that she had attended the SNAP meeting in January in her role as Neighbourhood Watch Co-Ordinator. She reported that there had been a discussion relating to speeding and she had enquired about the possibility of setting up a Community Speedwatch scheme in Griston.

7. Planning – The following applications had now been decided:

- | | | |
|----------------|---------------|---------------------------------|
| a) Manor House | 3PL/2016/1403 | Granted by Planning Dept. (BDC) |
| b) Caston Road | 3PL/2016/1415 | Granted by Planning Dept. (BDC) |
| c) Manor Road | 3PL/2016/1548 | Granted by Planning Dept. (BDC) |

8. Financial:

To **approve** payment of accounts:

a) Glasdon UK Ltd (<i>paid between meetings</i>)	£324.25
b) Caston Village Hall (<i>paid between meetings</i>)	£10.00
c) Spires Solicitors (<i>paid between meetings</i>)	£350.00
d) EON - January & February (<i>paid by direct debit</i>)	£55.24
e) ICO	£35.00
f) Caston Village Hall	£10.00
g) Pearce & Kemp	£201.60
h) Anglian Tree Solutions	£240.00
i) M Parker - Salary & Expenses to 31st March 2017	£692.38
	<u><u>£1,918.47</u></u>

Receipts

a) Village sign donation - Thorp House	£100.00
	<u><u>£100.00</u></u>

All accounts were approved and cheques signed.

Internal Auditor – A discussion took place regarding the appointment of the internal auditor for the Parish Council. It was felt that the auditor that had been used in previous years did a good job and was available at a low cost.

A decision was made to appoint Lynne Wellbelove to carry out the internal audit.

Transparency Code funding – The Clerk informed the meeting that she had recently attended a refresher course relating to the Transparency Code that Parish Councils abide by. She had been made aware that due to recent clarification on items that can be claimed for, a backdated claim could now be made for the computer software that was purchased last year. Also, a claim could be made for the Clerk’s hours used in setting up and maintaining the Parish Council website. The total amount to be claimed was £363. These funds were made available by the government to assist with any extra costs that may be incurred by the Parish Council in complying with the Code.

A decision was made to approve the submission of an application for £363.

The meeting was adjourned to allow a further public participation session ahead of the discussion regarding the purchase of the ‘Village Gates’.

The Chairman explained that the Parish Council had been made aware of the residents’ concerns and opposition to the previous decision made by the Parish Council to use public money to purchase and install four sets of gates in the village as a traffic calming measure.

The residents that attended the meeting and those that had contacted the Parish Council prior to the meeting raised several points in opposition to the gates. Most felt that they would be ineffective in reducing the speed of vehicles in the village. There was a concern as to whether they would be cleaned and maintained regularly. They may also prove to be an obstruction to the carrying out of hedge and verge maintenance. It was felt that the flashing SAM2 signs would have been a much better proposition.

Specific concerns were raised in relation to the current 60mph limit on Caston Road. Residents of Thompson Road also queried if the 40mph limit there could be reduced to 30mph. There was another concern about the speed of vehicles entering Thompson Road having emerged from Wayland Prison. This seemed to be mainly at the time of shift changes so the assumption was that these vehicles were being driven by staff members at the prison rather than visitors. ***~~It was suggested that a letter be sent to the prison regarding this problem.~~

9. Traffic Calming measures

Village Gates – Following the public participation session where this item had been fully discussed it was suggested that if the funding from Norfolk County Council is offered again in the future then a SAM2 flashing speed sign should be considered for the village. A written request had been received from two Councillors that this subject be re-visited with a view to the reversal of the previous decisions. A recorded vote was requested by the Vice-Chairman. The vote was unanimous.

It was resolved that the previous decisions made to install 'Village Gates' be reversed and the funding application withdrawn.

Community Speedwatch – The Neighbourhood Watch Co-Ordinator is looking into the possibility of setting up a Community Speedwatch Scheme in Griston to be run by residents from the village. It was felt that this would go some way to alleviating the concerns in relation to speeding in the village. Volunteers are currently being sought for this scheme. Although this will not be run by the Parish Council, it is necessary to have its agreement.

A decision was made that a Community Speedwatch scheme could be set up in Griston.

10. Happy Project – Unfortunately this item was not discussed as Jean Williams from the Wayland Partnership had been unable to attend. She had sent her apologies.

11. Village website – David Barnett had since the last meeting secured funding for the costs of running the village website from a local business. He has therefore withdrawn his request that this website be funded by the Parish Council in the future. Two Councillors had made a written request that the previous decision that this website be funded by the Parish Council be considered for reversal.

A decision was made that the Parish Council will not pay any of the costs of the privately-run village website and the previous decision be reversed.

12. Venue for Parish Council Meetings – A discussion took place regarding the continued use of Caston Village Hall for future Parish Council meetings. The Chairman suggested that the back room of the Waggon & Horses would be preferable as it was in Griston. He felt that what he considered to be the two most important meetings of the year in May should not be held outside the village. The Clerk advised the Councillors that Parish Council meetings cannot legally be held on licensed premises. This was only ever permissible where no other possible alternative venue was available. The law states that the venue can be within or outside the Parish. Caston Village Hall is an acceptable venue within the law. Advice had been sought by the Clerk from the legal department of the National Association of Local Councils. This clear legal advice was also provided to the Councillors in written form. The Chairman stated that the law was open to interpretation. The Chairman **** then proposed that future meetings of Griston Parish Council take place at the Waggon & Horses public house. The Vice-Chairman ask that the vote be recorded.

Votes for: Chairman David Barnett
Councillors Nicky Hornsey, Tracey Johnson, Marie McGuinness, Rose Woolhouse.

Votes against: Vice-Chairman Takis Zachariades

A decision was made that future meetings of Griston Parish Council be held at the Waggon & Horses public house.

(The Clerk/Proper Officer wishes to place on record that this decision was made against her advice and that of the legal department of the National Association of Local Councils and that any future Parish Council meetings held on licensed premises when an alternative venue is available will be in contravention of the law.)

The next meeting will be held on at 7.30pm on 2nd May 2017.

The meeting closed at approximately 9.30pm.

Amendments made prior to approval are included below:

- * **Sentence removed and replaced with:**
All Parish Councillors asked for personal attacks to stop or he would be asked to leave the meeting.
- ** **Sentence removed and replaced with:**
Resident (A) was informed by the Chairman that this would be explained under Item 8 Financial (iii) as listed in the agenda.
- *** **Sentence removed and replaced with:**
It was requested that a letter be sent to the prison reminding staff of the village speed limit when they are coming to and from their work.
- **** **Inserted:**
and Tracey