

Girton Parish Council

Susan Cumming
Clerk to the Parish Council
Telephone: (01223) 472181
Email: clerk@girton-cambs.org.uk

The Pavilion
Girton Recreation Ground
Cambridge Road, Girton
Cambridge CB3 0FH

Minutes of the Meeting of Girton Parish Council held on Wednesday 15th October, 2014 at St Vincent's Close Community Centre, Girton, at 7.30 p.m.

Residents in the parish were invited to attend this meeting and to speak at Item 14/118.1

Present: Cllrs: de Lacey (Chairman), Williams, Barnes, Buckler, Bygott, Cockley, Garner, Godby, Gordon, Harrington, Noble, Simpson, L Taylor, M Taylor (until end of item 14/123), Whittle.

6 members of the public (until end of item 14/121.1)

In attendance: S Cumming (Clerk), C Pollock (RFO) (both until start of item 14/122.4)

14/115 Welcome from the Chairman The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially the members of the public.

14/116 Apologies and reasons for absence Apologies had been received from County Councillor J Reynolds, and from PCSO Mani, and the Chairman accepted their reasons for absence.

14/117 Members' declarations of interest for items on the agenda Cllrs de Lacey and Gordon declared personal interests in item 14/121.5 as members of Girton Allotments Society. Cllr Whittle declared a personal interest in item 14/121.1 as he lives in the flood area.

14/118 Public Participation session on agenda items and matters of mutual interest:

1. Members of the Public. Mrs C Bromwich spoke about the forthcoming Cambridge Action on Energy talk for Sustainable Girton, at which Siobhan Mellon will speak about solid wall insulation. Thermal imaging will continue after Christmas. Dr R Irvine spoke about the flooding issues affecting residents in Dodford Lane, Northfield and Oakington Road (*Appendix A*). There are 56 homes in the Environment Agency's flood risk area. If there is no 'in principle' agreement the entire process may stop, so an agreement is needed to go forward. Dr Irvine spoke of the severe stress and anxiety faced by residents under the threat of flooding. When he purchased his house in 1976 he had no idea that it was in a flood area but Girton Parish Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council did know. The present Girton Parish Council is more active in their support, particularly former councillor Brian Bromwich, and Cllrs Whittle and de Lacey. Dr Irvine spoke of this being a golden opportunity to help by making an in principle agreement. Dr Irvine was thanked by the Chairman and answered questions from councillors including whether or not Girton Golf Club floods and if they would offer support, and whether the residents had considered funding themselves. Asked which engineering solution he favoured, the speaker said the cheaper flood wall to hold back water for about 12 hours. The Chairman thanked the speakers and members of the public.

2. County Councillor's Report (*Appendix B*). Cllr Reynolds had sent apologies and the Clerk will pass on any questions arising to him.

3. District Councillors' Reports (*Appendix C*). There were no questions arising from Cllr de Lacey's report.

4. Police Report (*Appendix D*). The Police Panel Meeting being held on 15th October is being attended by the vice-chairman of Girton Neighbourhood Watch.

14/119 To confirm the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 17th September, 2014 (previously circulated). The Minutes were proposed as a true record of the meeting by Cllr L Taylor, seconded by Cllr Williams, and approved with three abstentions.

14/120 Matters arising from the Minutes (for information only)

14/109.4 The Council has responded to Cambridgeshire County Council's Household Waste Public Consultation.

Noted by the Council.

14/121 Business items requiring a decision, or consideration by the Council.

1. To agree in principle a financial contribution towards flood defences in Girton (*Appendix E*). Proposed by Cllr Whittle, seconded by Cllr de Lacey. Cllr Whittle's updated report states that "If funds are forthcoming from these organisations, or other potential funders, then the EA can proceed to a full appraisal to reduce the flood risk to properties in Girton." Cllr Bygott has organised a meeting with Cambridge University and St John's College and has spoken with the Chief Executive of SCDC. It was questioned whether settling ponds on the NW Cambridge site will be enough to reduce the flow. Beck Brook is a worse offender than Washpit Brook, and clearing downstream from Oakington Road bridge is one of several small measures which can be done. The Environment Agency is looking for capital funding and the cost of maintenance would be asked for from residents. If the Parish Council gives a payment it would be easier to leverage other agencies. It was highlighted that the Parish Council is under no obligation to prevent flooding so options are limited. The S137 component of the precept has two constraints – firstly that it can raise only approximately £6 per elector, and secondly that any spending has to be roughly proportional to the number of villagers who benefit. The village has approximately 3,000 electors. The Parish Council would have to get legal advice and precise costings for any scheme, so cannot talk sums of money at present. The Environment Agency Funding Pack is geared specifically for Girton Parish Council so could be used as leverage with colleges, Cambridgeshire County Council and South Cambridgeshire District Council. If, in principle, the Parish Council agree, this could make the Environment Agency go to the second stage. Girton Parish Council could have a leadership role. Approved unanimously.

The members of the public left the meeting at this point.

2. To approve the draft contract for grass cutting at Girton Recreation Ground for the period 1st January 2015 to 31st December 2017, with a probationary period of one year (*Appendix F*). Proposed by Cllr Williams, seconded by Cllr Gordon and approved unanimously.

3. On the recommendation of the Wellbrook Way Development Committee, to authorise and approve payment for the landscaping of the Bowls Green area at Wellbrook Way to be funded from the Wellbrook Way account at a total cost not exceeding £720.00 (plus VAT) (*Appendix G*) Proposed by Cllr Gordon and no seconder needed because recommended by the Committee. Approved unanimously.

4. To authorise and approve payment for the purchase of ground cover membrane for use as a weed suppressant when planting the pyracantha hedge within the security fence around the Bowls Green at Wellbrook Way, plus bone meal for initial feed for hedging plants at the Bowls Green site, and herbicide for use on Parish Council sites as required. Total costs not to exceed £150 (plus VAT). (*Appendix H*). Proposed by Cllr Gordon, seconded by Cllr Godby and approved unanimously.

5. To approve a donation of £25.00 to Girton Allotment Society for the use of their wheeled strimmer to cut down weeds on Parish Council land at Wellbrook Way. Proposed by Cllr Gordon, seconded by Cllr Harrington. Cllr Gordon reported that there had been shoulder-high weeds on the piece of land outside the Bowls Green fence where the car park and landscaping will be, and it had taken nine hours' work to clear.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Gordon for his labours. Approved unanimously.

6. To approve a donation of £75.00 to the Royal British Legion Poppy Appeal, from S137 funds. Proposed by Cllr de Lacey, seconded by Cllr Garner. Last year's contribution was £65, but £75 was proposed as it is the centenary of the start of the First World War. Approved unanimously.

7. To approve the purchase of door finger protectors for changing room doors, from the Pavilion Maintenance budget, at a cost not exceeding £80 (plus VAT). Proposed by Cllr de Lacey, seconded by Cllr Gordon. The Pavilion already has finger-protectors on some doors but as children use the changing rooms, finger-protectors are needed on these doors too. Approved unanimously.

14/122 Finance and Resource Management

1. To approve payments for the previous month (previously circulated). Proposed by Cllr Godby, seconded by Cllr Garner, and approved with one abstention.

2. To approve the balance sheet (previously circulated). The RFO explained that there had been severe IT issues with remote accessing, so she was distributing photocopies at the meeting. The RFO reported that the second instalment of the precept has been received. Also, income from the Pavilion is running above budget at the moment. Regarding costs, budgets are sometimes not set at a reasonable figure with some costs not budgeted for, eg election expenses, and computer equipment and advice has exceeded budget. The RFO suggested increasing the tariff on the phone bill to get a static IP address implemented. Committees need to consider their 2015-16 budgets in November, and the Chairman would be grateful for Chairmen to speak with the RFO about such. The Chairman thanked the RFO. The balance sheet was proposed by Cllr Garner, seconded by Cllr Whittle and approved with one abstention.

3. To receive the Finance Report from 1st April, 2014 to date (previously circulated). Received by the Council.

4. To agree pay scales for the staff of the Parish Council for the next year. This item was deferred until the end of the meeting.

14/123 Correspondence (to be received)

1. 22 Sept 2014: Correspondence about Oakington Road hedges being overgrown.

2. 01 Oct 2014: Correspondence about traffic calming measures at Girton Road / Pepys Way junction.

3. 02 Oct 2014: Draft Decision on BT consultation on removal of telephone kiosks

4. 03 Oct 2014: Correspondence with the office of Rt Hon A Lansley MP regarding Oakington Road hedges.

5. 08 Oct 2014: Correspondence regarding overgrown hedge on Oakington Road.

6. 08 Oct 2014: Problems with overgrown hedge on Oakington Road.

7. 08 Oct 2014: Correspondence about pathway lights on road from Histon to Girton.

Received by the Council. Cllr Bygott has spoken with Pat Matthews of SCDC about the Oakington Road hedge, and Girton Parish Council has also been talking to Cambridgeshire County Council about it. It is a public safety issue as illuminated studs are covered with undergrowth. The landowner needs to be established. Regarding item 14/123.3 it was queried whether a defibrillator could be placed in the kiosk.

Cllr M Taylor left the meeting at this point.

14/124 To receive reports

1. Chairman's Report (*Appendix J*).

2. Girton Town Charity. No report this month.

3. Girton Youth Project. No report this month.

4. Footpaths. No report this month.

5. Water Management. As at item 14/121.1

6. Wellbrook Way Development Committee. Rain has affected works at Wellbrook Way.

14/125 To receive unconfirmed Committee Minutes

1. Planning Committee Meeting of 11th September, 2014 (previously circulated)
Received by the Council.

14/126 Matters raised by Members (for information only)

Raising the problems with quoracy, Cllr Gordon pointed out that the Planning Committee is one of the most important jobs which the Parish Council undertakes, with residents expecting support from the council. The Clerk will try to find a suitable day when most councillors could be present at a planning meeting, planning meetings then to be held at this set time.

Weeds in gutters look untidy and need clearing. This is a County Council responsibility and Cllr Reynolds will be consulted about this.

The issue of worn markings on road humps will be raised with County Council officers. It was highlighted that another planning application has been approved without going to Committee and it was queried whether the District Councillors could insist that applications go to Committee. The time-limit is often up before the Parish Council realise that there is a problem. Developers can claim non-determination if there is a delay. The power is with the developers.

Residents are anxious about the dip in the road before the A14 bridge and also at the Girton Road/Pepys Way junction, both of which have been reported to the contractors Coulsons and the Highways Authority. The Pepys Way speed hump is particularly damaging to vehicles since being repaired.

The Clerk and RFO left the meeting at this point.

14/122.4 To agree pay scales for the staff of the Parish Council for the next year.

There being no members of the public present it was not necessary to move an exclusion. Following the recent appraisals, the Chairman proposed a scale of salaries for 2014-15 for each employee. Seconded by Cllr Williams. An amendment was proposed for the Clerk's scale which the Chairman accepted and which was approved with one vote against. The others were approved unanimously.

The meeting closed at 9.08pm