

## **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 via video conference on Tuesday 18th August, 2020, at 7.00 p.m.**

*Residents were invited to submit written statements on issues of concern to any Councillor or the Clerk for presentation at item 20/81.1 or to attend by prior arrangement with the Clerk.*

**Present:** (Cllrs) Williams (Chairman), Buckler, Cockley, Dashwood (from item 20/81.2 onwards), de Lacey, Griffin, Hickford, Mitchell, Rodger.

Cllr L Harford (Cambs County Council), Cllr T Bygott (South Cambs District Council)

Mrs A Bonnett (Girton Town Charity)

**In attendance:** S Cumming (Clerk), L Lawrence (Assistant to the Clerk)

**20/78 Welcome from the Chairman.** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**20/79 Apologies and Reasons for Absence.** Apologies had been received from Cllrs Godby, Kettle and Thorrold, and Cllr Dashwood had apologised that she would be delayed in joining the meeting.

**20/80 Members' declarations of interest for items on the agenda.** None.

#### **20/81 Public Participation session on agenda items and matters of mutual interest:**

1. Members of the Public. Written representations to be verbally presented by Councillors, or attendance by prior arrangement with the Clerk. A resident had spoken of her wish for a wildflower meadow at Mayfield Triangle and may attend a future meeting to propose this.

The Girton Town Charity Report (Item 20/87.2) was brought forward:

The sculptor has removed the damaged sections of the artistic railings for repair at his site in Hereford, and these will be returned in early September. The railings were unbolted from the foundations, which are secure. The housing at Suffolk Terrace is now built to beyond the first floor and is progressing well. The SCDC Tree Officer is concerned about the Canadian Maple, which has not survived well over the summer and the building works, but everything is being done as per the arboriculturist's report. There has been an expression of interest from a village resident regarding becoming a GPC-appointed Trustee. The appointment would be made in advance of Robin Hiley's retirement as a Trustee in May 2021. The Parish Council Chairman agreed that the PC should be involved in the selection process but there seems to be a lack of clarity of how this should be achieved. The PC is delighted at the appointment of Mrs D Macklin as a Trustee in April 2020, but it was queried why her appointment hadn't gone through this process. It was explained that she is a GTC-appointee rather than a Parish Council- one. It was questioned whether works at Michael's Close are on hold. Mrs Bonnet explained that GTC are currently

agreeing conditions with South Cambs. District Council and when this process is completed they will go out to tender for construction companies, with works commencing in March/April 2021. The William Collyn Community Centre will re-open on 1st September and it will be good to have community groups back again. The Chairman thanked the GTC Chair of Trustees for her report.

Cllr Dashwood joined the meeting at this point.

2. County Councillor's Report (*Appendix A*) Cllr Harford explained that hers is an informal report this month as there are no County Council meetings. She is 'in awe' of what the Parish Council are doing at the moment. It was queried if links are to be made to the NMU at Washpit Lane and improvements to footpaths 4 and 5, and Cllr Harford explained that there is a hold-up due to land acquisition, and the most that can be achieved for the footpaths will be a cycle footpath rather than a bridleway. It was suggested that residents should be notified that there may be more cycle traffic on Washpit Lane but as this is largely existing highway access to the farm entrance this is unlikely to be of significance. The Chairman thanked Cllr Harford for her report.

3. District Councillors' Reports (*Appendix B*) Cllr Bygott reported that he has met with Harry Chalk, the new Environment Agency representative for our area, regarding the Oakington Road bridge. The Environment Agency has changed its funding rules and suggested that Cllr Bygott writes to them with ideas. Cllr Bygott suggests lowering the concrete below the bridge. The Clerk will send Cllr Bygott a report on the bridge from former Water Management Officer, Doug Whittle. Cllr Bygott spoke of the government white paper 'Planning for the Future' regarding replacing the planning system introduced in 1948. This is an opportunity to greatly improve how the planning system works and he is happy to have representations from the parish council. In response, Councillors commented on negative reporting from the press on this white paper. Cllr Bygott explained the Australian planning process, and the need to temper what the UK government wants. Cllr Harford stressed the importance of local councils giving their views at the Local Plan stage.

There were no questions arising from Cllr de Lacey's written report. Regarding fly-tipping at Milton tip, Cllr Hickford suggested the new booking system is working well, but unfortunately a few people will still fly-tip.

4. Police Report. No report this month.

### **20/82 To confirm the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 21st July, 2020**

(*previously circulated*). It was suggested the following amendments be made. In item 20/67, that the new Rector be referred to as 'the Reverend Mr Michael Bigg', in item 20/73.6 that the phrase 'did not' be substituted for 'could not', and that in item 20/73.1 that the phrase 'other reasons' be replaced with 'to be more flexible regarding the pandemic'.

With these amendments, the Minutes were proposed as a true record of the meeting by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr Hickford, and approved with one abstention.

### **20/83 Matters arising from the Minutes (for information only)**

Regarding item 20/73.6, Cllr Hickford had received a forwarded email from Cllr de Lacey but felt that this did not reflect what was stated at the meeting. Cllr de Lacey confirmed that the email was what he had meant to convey at the meeting and Cllr Hickford accepted this.

The Chairman has put together a response to the Northstowe planning proposal and following circulation to all the Council, this had been submitted by the end of July.

The advisory cycle lane was still a matter for debate. The Chairman and Cllr Harford are to meet with the Local Highways Officer on 19th August.

Cllr Dashwood raised concerns regarding the water table and water supply for Northstowe 3 development.

#### **20/84 Business items requiring a decision, or consideration by the Council.**

1. To approve the 2019-20 AGAR submission and arrangements for internal audit prior to submission to the external auditors. The Chairman has a number of queries so suggested that this item be held over for an extraordinary meeting by the end of the month. The Internal Audit will be carried out on 1st September.
2. To agree the next steps in the Pavilion re-modelling project (*Appendix C*). The list of agreed actions was proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr Hickford. The Chairman thanked County Councillors for their support, which has been very helpful. He also welcomes support from District Councillors. Cllr de Lacey felt that for his support to be valid it would be better if he was not involved with the planning submission. So he proposed to abstain but wishes the Council to continue with the plans. Cllr Hickford thanked the Chairman and Vice-Chairman for their contributions to the project. Approved with one abstention.
3. To consider provision of plant troughs instead of bollards along the car park footpath. Cllr Buckler was concerned that concrete troughs would chip, plus the ongoing maintenance burden, and the need for a watering rota for the planters. There would also be significant cost in replanting twice annually. Cllr de Lacey suggested that a business plan be presented to the Council before going ahead. The item was deferred for the Chairman to research suitable planter materials and how they could be managed.
4. To approve a tender for crown lifting of trees on Mayfield Triangle. Mr G Thorpe had been prepared to undertake these works but is unfortunately unable to do so because of illness, so professional quotations will be sought.
5. To agree arrangements for the re-opening of Girton Parish Council amenities. A working group comprising Cllrs Cockley and Rodger, the Clerk and Assistant Clerk are looking at this and reporting back to the Chairman. Cllr Cockley expressed concern that the Pavilion could lose custom if not opening in early September when the William Collyn Community Centre is doing so. It is proposed that a one-way system operates in the Pavilion, with access to the disabled toilet only and no use to be made of the kitchen. There would be a half-hour gap between bookings, with a protocol and risk assessment to be received from all users. Users are to operate under their own risk, and to keep attendance Approved unanimously.  
In answer to a question it was stated that GPC staff would be fully-paid if they should have to isolate for 14 days.

#### **20/85 Finance and Resource Management**

1. To approve the payments schedule for the past month (previously circulated). Proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr Mitchell, and approved unanimously.
2. To note any significant variance from usual levels of monthly income/expenditure. None.

**20/86 Correspondence (to be received)** None.

### **20/87 To receive reports**

1. Chairman's Report (*Appendix D*) Further to his report, the Chairman explained that if the Pavilion was run by a Management Committee, Trustees of such would not have to charge VAT and there would be no need to pay business rates. The full implications of this would need careful consideration so it was likely that the option to register for VAT would be preferable in the short term.
2. Girton Town Charity Report. This report was presented earlier in the meeting, at item 20/81.1
3. Water Management Report (*Appendix E*). Cllr Rodger reported that she has met with Harry Chalk from the Environment Agency, who has been very helpful.

### **20/88 Items which the Council need to discuss at the next meeting.**

Cllrs Cockley and Rodger kindly offer to clear weeds at Wellbrook Way play area.

Cllr Dashwood expressed concern regarding the maple tree on the former-WI site, which it has been suggested is dying and should be felled. The tree has a TPO on it.

The meeting closed at 8.45pm

## **APPENDIX A**

### **Cambridgeshire County Councillor's Report Girton Parish Council meeting - 18 August 2020**

**Congratulations** Your meeting in August is usually for essential items only and I think I usually get away with no report. However, this year those essential items include some really exciting projects that you have been working on and for one of which I must particularly congratulate you, so here's a very short report on mainly local issues. The project I refer to is the one to extend and improve the pavilion. As you already know, the chairman's hard work on an application for funding from the heavily oversubscribed County Council's Community Capital Fund has been successful! I am sure that with your continuing support, this will prove to be a very popular project that will provide a great deal of benefit for the local community. There is a lot of hard work still to do but, the greatest obstacle to any major project, securing the funding is a major step forward on the journey, so my sincere congratulations on this success.

**Local Highways** Of course you have also been working on achieving local highways improvements that will help to make Girton a safer place for everyone. Your successful bid for funding in this current budget year will see work start this month. This project for a 20mph zone will be combined with the resurfacing of Cambridge Road/High Street currently scheduled to be carried out from 25 August to 04 September [excluding weekend and bank holiday]. I have shamelessly been negotiating to incorporate other features that have been on the wish list up till now; a chevron warning sign at the bend outside the former language school and a review of the 30/40mph zones at the Oakingtonbound end of the village. We are still working on a compromise with regard to the temporary cycle lanes; the most important thing is that we are all in agreement that we will continue to work together on making Girton's highways

infrastructure as safe as it can be. The MVAS that you have also been given funding for, will help to monitor traffic speeds and volumes but perhaps now is the time for us to make another concerted effort to try and set up a Speedwatch group in the village. If sufficient residents volunteered they could just concentrate on participating in events set up at the location that they are particularly concerned about. Please do let me have your views on this.

**Flooding** The severe rainfall events at the weekend prompted three residents to contact me. One relates to the impact of run off from the speed table on High Street in the vicinity of Churchfield Court. This is an issue of which I was already aware and which I am currently discussing with the highways project engineer who is working on the combination of the resurfacing and LHI work. The second relates to Mayfield Road and I have sought our local highways officer's help with this one. I haven't had any other issues reported to me; if you know of any others, please do let me know.

**Covid-19** The latest figures I have received for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough are as follows [received by email on 16.08.2020]: Confirmed Covid-19 cases - overall and in care homes

- 66 new lab-confirmed Covid-19 cases were detected in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in the latest reporting period, 3-9 August (as at 12 August). This is minus 10 compared to the previous week.
- The cumulative rate of Covid-19 cases per 100,000 population in Huntingdonshire (519.8) and Peterborough (750.5) are statistically significantly higher than the national rate (481.4) (data at 12 August).
- The 7 day rolling average of confirmed cases for Cambridgeshire, Peterborough, and each of the Cambridgeshire districts, shows a declining trend overall in Covid-19 cases. However, confirmed cases have increased in Cambridge (+5), Huntingdonshire (+2), and Cambridgeshire (+3) in the most recent reporting week. All cause and Covid-19 deaths – all settings and in care homes
- No Covid-19 related deaths occurred in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough in ONS reporting week 31, down from one in week 30.
- All-cause deaths numbers remained the same as week 30 for Cambridgeshire and Peterborough combined (96 deaths). At a district level, East Cambridgeshire (+5) and South Cambridgeshire (+1) had an increase in all-cause deaths between the last two reporting weeks.
- The last notifications of a Covid-19 related death in a care home setting were 15th July for Cambridgeshire, and 8th July for Peterborough (data at 11 August).
- The number of all-cause deaths is below the 2014-18 average in Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Numbers in Huntingdonshire remain above the 5yr average. All other districts are below/similar. • The number of all-cause deaths in care homes are similar to the 2014-18 average in South Cambridgeshire, and below in Cambridgeshire, Peterborough, and the remaining districts. Some say that we have been lucky in Cambridgeshire to have had the relatively low number of cases that we have had in the county but I firmly believe that this is in no small part due to the level of compliance with the rules that the local population has committed to. We have to remember though that the virus is still very much with us and we should all continue to do the basic things that we have been doing for so long.

I look forward to joining you all at your virtual meeting tomorrow evening.

Take care. Stay safe.

Lynda

lyndaharford@icloud.com; 01954 251775/07889 131022; follow me on Twitter: @2whit2whoo

**APPENDIX B**  
**District Councillor's Report by Cllr Douglas de Lacey**

First, an unreserved apology: last month I referred to 'Cambridge Water's treatment plant in Milton'; it is of course run by Anglian Water.

As always this is a quiet time of year. I have been involved with the Local Government Association over a new model Code of Conduct. One major change in the model Code is that instead of the terminology of 'respect' the new Code suggests we should 'treat all persons with civility'. For two reasons I find this simply bizarre. Firstly because its etymology comes from the civis, the state, so one could argue that 'civil servants' are necessarily civil; but second because while 'respect' in my vocabulary means understanding and acknowledging the other's position, 'civility' connotes mere politeness, if that (the code does define it as 'politeness and courtesy'). The problem of course is that we are all Humpty Dumpty when it comes to language: 'When I use a word it means what I want it to mean'. But I don't see this as an improvement. A secondary issue discussed by the group was the extent to which a Code should be prescriptive as distinct from setting high-level but vague aspirations.

But the big news of the month is the Government's announcement of major changes to planning law. As I understand them, the proposals are that the development of a Local Plan should become 'democratic' (as though it is not already!) but from then on the Plan becomes a developers' charter with no further local involvement. The Plan should designate 3 categories of land: Growth Areas; Renewal Areas, and Protected Areas. In the first, outline approval for development would be automatically secured for forms and types of development specified in the Local Plan. In the second, there could be some 'gentle' development; and in the third 'restricted' development (whatever that means). And all this without any further local input. The theory is that this will free up development of much-needed housing; this flies in the face of the fact that the real hold-up is not the granting of planning permission but the practice of land-banking and shortages of labour and supplies; no changes in planning law will overcome those.

It is more difficult now to dispose of waste which will not go to your bins, but be warned that we are cracking down on illegal fly-tipping: one such near the Milton tip has received a fine of £400. I have also been asked to remind residents to dispose of single-use PPE responsibly: in a bag inside the black bin.

Finally please be aware that there are criminals targeting people's fears over test and trace. Should you need it, be aware that the testing part in test and trace is free; anyone who offers you a test for a price is acting illegally.

Douglas de Lacey

**APPENDIX C**  
**Pavilion Remodelling and Extension Task & Finish Group Meeting**

Monday 17<sup>th</sup> August 2020

(Via Zoom)

Present: Roger Hickford

Gill Cockley

County Cllr Lynda Harford

Haydn Williams (Reporting)

Following our successful application to the County Council Communities Fund for a grant towards the project, discussion was directed towards the next steps that need to be undertaken. The following points were discussed.

Engagement of Cheffins to progress development and submission of the Planning Application at a proposed cost of £2750 + VAT plus reasonable out of pocket expenses. A meeting at the Pavilion will be arranged as soon as possible.

Subject to agreement of Cheffins, and in view of concerns about likely delays and lack of real benefit, no pre-application submission will be submitted. If major negative concerns are identified during processing of the application, then the best option is withdrawal, modification and resubmission.

Support of our District Councillors will be of benefit and we may need to call upon them to push for resolution of the application. For this reason it would be better that they not be directly involved in the application development but provide input as they see fit. Any other Parish Councillors who feel they can usefully contribute will be invited to put themselves forward as members of this Task & Finish group.

In order to meet the County Council grant schedule it is preferable that the application be submitted by the end of the month.

Our Architect is developing a payments schedule for submission to the CCCF. If necessary it should specify the internal remodelling works to be conducted first as these are not dependent on planning permission and should begin as soon as possible.

Need to explore candidates for project management of the entire process, from tender document preparation through value engineering to completion. Recommendations to be sought from neighbouring PCs.

Parking provision is thought to be adequate, as is, but if necessary we can add the provision of overflow parking in 10 acre field as currently used in Feast Week. If necessary we could explore use of the Glebe School car park as an occasional measure. As a courtesy we will inform Glebe

Chair of Governors of our plans and possible impact on the access to the rear entrance during building works and will ask about this possibility.

Additional sources of grant funding are being assessed and Amey Crespa seems a likely candidate. In order to meet the T&Cs of this process we may need to separate out the internal re-organisation costs of the project and seek a contribution to that.

In order to reclaim the substantial amount of VAT on the project we have the option of becoming VAT registered. We understand that this will mean that we shall have to charge VAT on future lettings of the facility but it is possible we shall not need to do so on the other sports facilities. We have been advised that letting of the Pavilion to a Management Committee for a peppercorn rent is not recommended. We shall explore this further before making a final decision however, as it would also provide the option of Business Rates exemption.

Means of communicating the development of the project with village was discussed and it was agreed we should report in the next GPN. This should explain the reasoning behind the project, the benefits to users and the Parish in general, the successful grant application and the likely timescales for the work. We shall also publish the current plans and the details of the grant application on the Parish Website.

Any repositioning of play equipment to facilitate the extended hall footprint should be scheduled ahead of the building works.

Disruption to current users of the building will need to be dealt with as the work schedule is developed. It is hoped that two changing room can always be available (assuming the building is reopened). Use of WCC will be explored with the possibility of the PC subsidising any difference in hire charges. This might limit the temptation to defect permanently.

Large amount of Parish archives currently held in the loft needs to be sorted, boxed, and sent to the County Archives in Ely.

Other users who store materials in the loft will need to be given notice that they will need to make alternative arrangements.

It was agreed that the PC Meeting of 18<sup>th</sup> August 2020 be asked to review and approve all of the above deliberations and actions under the scheduled agenda item.

Haydn Williams  
17<sup>th</sup> August 2020

**APPENDIX D**  
**Chairman's Report**  
**12<sup>th</sup> August 2020**

The major news of importance this month is the notification that our application for a grant of £275000 from the County Council Communities Capital Fund for remodelling and extension of the Pavilion was



successful. We now need to progress the Planning Application without delay. I have met with our architect at the Pavilion to check on details of dimensions of the existing building and planning application drawings are in preparation. We shall also submit for pre application advice. I have spoken to other parishes about the VAT issue and it seems we shall need to become registered for VAT in order to reclaim the substantial VAT element of the refurbishment cost. I understand that it may be possible to exempt the external facilities hire from VAT charges which would mean that we would only need to charge and pay VAT on Hall hire. Although we have sufficient reserves to provide matched funding for the project we shall make further grant applications to other bodies to provide a contingency fund. Cllr Harford is providing suggestions for bodies that would be suitable potential sources.

Following discussion at last month's PC meeting I obtained an extension for submission of our comments on Northstowe 3A application. A draft of our views was circulated and agreed with councillors and submitted before the end of July. We also submitted our response to Highways proposals for the new 20mph limit and temporary cycle lanes. A meeting is awaited.

We are progressing completion of the 2020 AGAR and hope to have this ready for approval at our August meeting.

Cllr Lynda Harford has confirmed that footpath 4 from Weavers Field and footpath 5 on the other side of Huntingdon Road were scheduled for upgrade to facilitate cyclists and pedestrians as part of the A14 improvements. The work has apparently been delayed by land ownership questions. Cllr Harford is exploring this with Officers. Equestrians in the area have expressed dismay that there is no suitable connection for horses from Girton to the new NMU. The link along Washpit Lane would appear to be an obvious solution.

Regrettably littering of our grounds continues to be a problem from weekend gatherings at the edge of the 10 Acre Field. Alarmingly we received a report via the web site of a party in the trees complete with bonfire one Sunday evening. A member of the public reported it to the Police but was told to inform the Parish Council. Quite how we were expected to react is unclear.

**Haydn Williams**

## **APPENDIX E**

### **Water Management Report, August 2020**

A zoom meeting was held on 12 August with Richard Taylor (Environment Agency), Professor Robin Irvine, myself, and our new contact at the Environment Agency, Harry Chalk.

The following is Harry's summary of our discussions:

- Girton flood alleviation scheme: I'll keep you updated on this every 2-3 months or so. As I outlined, the first step is to work on modelling before we can carry out an appraisal of options. The appraisal will include previously considered options but under new funding rules. Alongside this, new options will also be considered such as natural flood management, holding water upstream of Girton. As you know, we had challenges with the cost of options previously, so we will have to hold our breath.

I've also noted down your ideas about the practice field at the golf club, your comments on property level resilience measures, as well as the increasing number of properties which may become at risk of flooding over time. We will be sure to assess the impact of climate change when undertaking our appraisal.

- Right bank downstream of Oakington Road Bridge: As mentioned, we're conducting a study investigating bank slippage across the whole catchment from the Beck Brook down to the Cottenham Lode. This is likely to be a slow burner, but I'll keep you posted as and when.

- Flow control at Eddington: I'll see what I can do about a site visit as restrictions ease for going out to site. It was good to hear your observations that the Washpit now seems to rise more slowly after heavy rainfall.

#### Other points:

The remains of the old bridge, and the new bridge, along the practice ground section of the Beck Brook, are considered hazards and should be removed. The EA will attempt to find out who is responsible for this. It is believed to be Chivers.

Although this is some years hence, there is a possible impact of Northstowe Phase 3. Increased traffic through Girton could put additional strain on the Oakington Road Bridge, which is already showing signs of cracking.

I walked along Beck Brook on the Right Bank, downstream of the Oakington Road Bridge, at the weekend. I was alarmed at the amount of vegetation growing on the banks, and have taken photos which I have sent to the Environment Agency.

The impact of the NMU was discussed, but it was agreed that until all the work has been completed, it was not possible to accurately assess any adverse consequences for Washpit and Beck Brook. Highways England have assured us that all necessary mitigation is in place. This will continue to be monitored.

Mary Rodger, 17 August 2020