

Girton Parish Council

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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 17th November, 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 20/120.1, with video-conference details for the public open session available on request from the Clerk.

Present: (Councillors) Williams (Chairman), Cockley, Dashwood, de Lacey, Hickford, Kettle, Mitchell, Rodger.

Cllr L Harford (Cambs County Council)

Mrs A Bonnett (Girton Town Charity)

2 members of the public

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

20/117 Welcome from the Chairman. The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting, especially the two members of the public and Mrs A Bonnett of Girton Town Charity.

20/118 Apologies and Reasons for Absence. Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Buckler, Godby, Griffin, Thorrold, and District Councillor Bygott, and the Chairman accepted their reasons for absence.

20/119 Members' declarations for items on the agenda. None.

20/120 Public Participation session on agenda items and matters of mutual interest:

1. Members of the Public. Written representations to be verbally presented by Councillors. Mr & Mrs B Bromwich reported that they have measured recent rainfall at Beck Brook bridge and are shocked by the increase in cracks in the parapet. Cllr de Lacey has taken photographic evidence. The structure is getting old and showing signs of distress.. Cllr Bygott is looking into matters with the bridge which should be properly looked at to see how sound it is. Prof R Irvine is also monitoring cracks in the bridge. Cllr Rodger had raised this a few meetings' ago regarding the increased traffic flow from Northstowe The two other bridges installed by Cambs County Council, at Westwick and on the guided busway, have been replaced. Mr Bromwich has given Cllr de Lacey a dossier of work undertaken 11 years ago. It was advised that this matter should be passed on to Cambs County Council. The Chairman thanked Mr & Mrs Bromwich for their report.

2. County Councillor's Report (*Appendix A*). Cllr Harford reported that Girton speed cushions were being replaced that day, and the Local Highways Improvements works are expected to be undertaken in

January-February 2021. Cllr Harford will also follow-up about the bridge. Cllr Harford and the Chairman are to meet with the Principal of Gretton School to discuss traffic and congestion at the school's new site. Regarding verge-maintenance, Parish and Town Councils are to be allowed to do what they like. Footpath 4 has been inspected and needs more work than can be done as ad-hoc works. Cllr Harford will also look into progress with Cambs County Council regarding the Pavilion extension grant provision contract agreement.

3. District Councillors' Reports (*Appendix B*). Cllr de Lacey reported that two officer errors related to the Fewes Lane Consortium had been made by Planners and will have to go to the High Court. Residents on Huntingdon Road are concerned about a concrete path which has been a permissive right of way for a century, but recently gated by Eddington so no longer accessible. Cllr de Lacey has also asked why Sainsbury's have imposed fines on disabled parking bay users. Further to Cllr Bygott's written report, it was questioned whether the cost of relocation of College wine cellars had been factored into the Metro scheme proposals!

4. Police Report. Regarding the remodelling of the Community Safety Team, concerns were expressed regarding the knock-on effect on the rest of the policing team. The Chief of Police will be attending the next SCDC Scrutiny Committee Meeting and Cllr de Lacey will question him regarding the implications.

20/121 To confirm the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 20th October, 2020 (previously circulated). Cllr de Lacey noted three typos, to be corrected to 'proposed', 'cost' and 'tyre'. With the amended typos, the Minutes were proposed as a true record of the meeting by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr Kettle, and approved with one abstention.

20/122 Matters arising from the Minutes (for information only)

20/112.3 A virtual initial meeting of the Rewilding Task Group was held on 29th October.

20/112.6 A virtual meeting regarding Pavilion procurement was held on 27th October.

20/112.7 The Parish Council's donation has been doubled this year to mitigate Covid-19's adverse effect upon the charity sector.

Noted by the Council.

20/123 Business items requiring a decision, or consideration by the Council.

1. To agree the Parish Council position on changes to public rights of way relating to the A14 upgrade. (background information previously circulated.) Residents' emails supporting rights of way had been circulated to Councillors. We need to maintain rights of way where Footpath 7 goes to The Avenue and Bridleway 6 where it goes under the M11. Cllr Harford has been copied on these issues. The Chairman proposed to support Cllr Harford in finding what is happening to these rights of way, seconded by Cllr de Lacey and approved unanimously.
2. To approve a contractor for tree works alongside the Recreation Ground Car Park. (Cost quotations to be circulated.) No quotations received.
3. To approve a contractor for installation of bollards alongside the footpath at the Recreation Ground Car Park (subject to quotations being received). No contractors have quoted, although bollards have been sourced at a reduction of £400 on the last quotation. The Chairman is also in touch with local fencing contractors.

4. To agree new signage for dog walking at the Recreation Ground. Having looked at this a year ago, Cllr Cockley has revisited this issue with Cllr Rodger and local resident Ms K Meaby, who reports there are problems with dogs let loose in the car park, and running free in the Millenium Wood and on 10-Acre Field. Currently there are small, inadequate signs for dog-walkers. It was queried if the Rector would permit egress through the churchyard with dogs, and it was suggested that the corner of the Recreation Ground to the churchyard could be roped off. Cllrs Cockley and Rodger propose to put together a set of signs and where to put them for the next meeting. Cllr Hickford agreed that since lockdown more people are using the Rec facilities on an individual basis, and improved signage would be a really good idea. We would have to make it clear that dogs must be kept on leads through the churchyard and until they reach St John's Field. Cllr de Lacey suggested a large dog walking map for the village particularly around the Pavilion. Cllr Dashwood is happy to join Cllrs Cockley and Rodger on this project.

20/124 Finance and Resource Management

1. To approve the payments schedule for the past month (previously circulated). Proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr Rodger and approved with two abstentions.
2. To note any significant variance from usual levels of monthly income/expenditure. Over the lockdown, income has been zero and expenditure low in terms of maintenance costs, with the variance noted.

20/125 Correspondence (to be received)

1. Letter to Parishes from SCDC regarding Parish Precept requests for 2021 (forwarded separately)
There were no comments on the letter.

20/126 To receive reports

1. Chairman's Report (*Appendix B*)
2. Girton Town Charity Report. Mrs Bonnett reported that good progress is being made on Suffolk Terrace, and the Charity has advertised for appointees for these houses and at Centenary Court. Interviews will be held in early December. The Canadian Maple tree at Suffolk Terrace will be taken down on the advice of the SCDC Tree Officer and replaced by a Norwegian Maple. It was queried if there will be a report for residents on what has happened to the tree. Mrs Bonnett offered a slice of the tree to Girton WI, who formerly had their hut on the site. The railings and footpath by the car park have now been repaired. William Collyn Community Centre is closed during this lockdown but is able to run counselling and medical services, with the staff now employed by GTC. Regarding the High Street development, it is hoped to ask for tenders in December with works starting in March next year with the demolition of 22 High Street. Regarding the advertisement for Parish Council appointed Trustees of GTC, the Chairman queried whether day-time meetings would deter those working full-time from applying.

20/127 Items which the Council need to discuss at the next meeting.

The Rewilding Group has received a good response from residents. On 25th November, the group is meeting online with Eddington's Operations Manager to share his experience of introducing wildflower verges at Eddington.

Councillors are upset to see that the solar-powered bus timetable recently installed by Cambs County Council has been vandalised. This will be mentioned in the Parish Council's report for Girton Parish News.

The meeting closed at 8.30pm

APPENDIX A

Cambridgeshire County Councillor's Report Girton Parish Council - 17 November 2020 meeting

Finance It's that time of year when the county council is again looking to set its budget for the next financial year. Following the challenges of the first half of this financial year, it is clear that there is a significant funding gap. Consequently the council has now written to the government offering options of financial flexibility to meet future budget demands, as well as directly requesting further funding. Over the last four years the council has worked closely with local MPs to campaign for a fairer funding deal for the county. This resulted in a good level of one-off support in advance of a government promise of a full spending review. However, as councillors approach this year's budget setting round, they may be facing a stark choice between either taking potentially drastic measures to bridge this Covid-19 related gap, or an unacceptable rise in local taxation. In his letter the leader of the council asks the government to take decisive action to support local services. In February, Cambridgeshire County Council agreed a business plan and budget for 2020-2021 that reflected a positive and healthy short and medium term financial position. Thus it was not only able to set a balanced budget for 2020-2021 but also had a clear and achievable position for the year 2021/2022 with savings of just £4.2m needing to be made to balance a total budget of £650m. However, less than six weeks later the whole of the UK was in lockdown. As the implications of the pandemic hit, the council immediately took a central role in coordinating the response of public services across the county as they all tried to manage the complex public health and economic consequences. The council is now asking government to recognise the hard work that went into that effort and its financial impact, and to do what it needs to do, so that the council can continue to deliver the services that its residents expect and need.

Health & Social Care Despite the fact that numbers of Covid-19 cases [although rising] are still relatively low in South Cambridgeshire, as we all know, a nationwide second lockdown is now in progress. The prospect of isolation against a backdrop of short days, and weather that does nothing to encourage outdoor activity, won't be welcomed by many residents who live alone. Thank you to the group that is already reactivating the Covid-19 support that was in place during the first lockdown and I know, too that another group is also working on a 'memories' project to try to engage residents. I would like to make you aware of an excellent organisation called Care Network with whom I am regularly in touch and with whom I have recently been speaking about the challenges of loneliness and social isolation. If you feel there is a need, I can provide contact details for you to discuss the resources that are available through Care Network. Please let me know if you would like me to make an introduction for you.

Highways The highest number of complaints that I have received during the last month from local residents has been about the condition of footpaths and verges. I cannot disagree with anyone who is

concerned about this; generally across the county residents and their local councillors are concerned about the condition of footpaths. I continue to support residents' individual requests and to ask for more to be done in Girton generally but, as I have said before, the budget is small and the demands on each local highways officer to carry out this work are very high. I have again asked for the very well used section of footpath between Wellbrook Way and Girton Glebe Primary School to be inspected and for appropriate work to be carried out. Meanwhile I continue to make the case for a general review of policy/budget for footpath maintenance. On a more positive note I am pleased to have been invited to join a small group of senior officers and councillors to review the way the council manages its highways verges; the ambition being to implement a policy that will provide the greatest environmental benefit. This month I attended a workshop which included a presentation from Dorset County Council on the impressive changes it has made. The council will take learning from this and others with experience, to create a verge management regime that will improve biodiversity and generate other benefits including long term financial savings. I'll keep you updated on progress.

Education The details of the current lockdown are continuously reviewed by the education service. The county council's Director of Education [DoE] continues to provide supportive daily communications for all headteachers. The current advice is that all those in the clinically extremely vulnerable group should work from home. This obviously impacts on staff numbers in school and thus the way that schools manage the education offer. Recently too for one South Cambridgeshire primary school a small number of confirmed Covid-19 cases has resulted in large numbers of both pupils and staff having to self isolate, leading to a week long closure. I receive a weekly list of schools that have had cases confirmed. In the local area numbers are generally very low. It is a shame that Cambridge News chose as a recent on-line headline, an out of context quote from the county council's press release that seems not to reflect that. In September the Department of Health and Social Care agreed to supply PPE to Education Services free of charge. Hopefully this will save schools some money and also the time that would otherwise be spent on sourcing PPE. The council is providing an appropriate distribution process. I accepted an invitation this month to attend a Zoom budget briefing given by the DoE for headteachers and school business managers. It was extremely well attended. Despite an existing funding proposal there is concern about government funding for the forthcoming year particularly around the allocation for Special Educational Needs & Disabilities.

Libraries The county's libraries will continue to offer a limited service during lockdown including the Select and Collect offer that you may already be used to. Full details of what is being offered can be accessed at: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/libraries-leisure-culture/libraries>

Household Recycling Centres The council will continue to maintain the full Household Recycling Centres service with 2 metre social distancing measures in place during this new period of lockdown. It is still getting high numbers of residents either booking slots and then not showing up, or not making bookings before arriving at the sites where prior booking is required for all users. The site operatives continue to take a light touch approach on enforcement but ask please that people use the centres in accordance with the measures that have been introduced to maintain public safety at a difficult time. To book a visit: <https://www.cambridgeshire.gov.uk/residents/waste-and-recycling/household-recycling-centres> or for anyone unable to go on line, the phone number to make a booking is: 0345 045 5207.

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

Take care. Stay safe.

Lynda

APPENDIX B

i) District Councillor's Report from Cllr Douglas de Lacey

I was startled to read Cllr Bygott's report in the last Girton Parish News: under a sensationalist headline 'District Council unlawfully withheld Parish Precepts' he wrote 'It has been confirmed by South Cambridgeshire District Council's Administration that in April this year, when parish councils were contacted to be told that the District would need to delay some of the payments to the parishes, the District Council had no legal powers to do so'. This is nonsense. Because covid-19 caused us severe cash-flow problems (we were trying to save lives and livelihoods), Parish Councils were asked (not told!) by officers whether they would allow us to defer payments. Those which were not willing were immediately paid: all the others were paid almost immediately. Nothing was withheld, nothing was done without parish agreement. I take a very dim view of this sniping at our hard-working officers when they have no right of reply.

It was exciting to see my blue bin emptied into our first all-electric waste lorry. Its purchase is part of our drive to reduce emissions and air pollution. At £400,000 it is more expensive than its diesel counterparts but the whole-life costs should be lower, quite apart from its other benefits. We hope to replace the rest of the fleet in due course.

The consultation on the planning white paper has now closed and as well as endorsing the Council's response I submitted my own, which I shall forward on request.

The University is proposing to disband the Board which manages the Eddington site and replace it with a new Board to manage all the University estates. I spoke at the formal Discussion on the proposals: it was an opportunity to expose some of the many failings of the current management, and I hope that whether or not the new Board is approved the University will address them.

The Civic Affairs Committee on 3 November gave very close scrutiny to the proposals for a new Parish of Northstowe, a highly contentious issue for the parishes around the development. There has been much consultation and we were able to approve the most popular option and satisfy most of the parish councils' concerns. This now goes to full Council. We looked at the bullying issue remitted to us from Council and I am pleased that the Tories and LibDems had worked together on a proposal acceptable to all sides.

As Chairman I was due to plant a memorial tree to commemorate the 75th anniversary of the end of the second world war; This has had to be postponed at least until December, and possibly indefinitely.

Douglas de Lacey

ii) District Councillor's Report - Cllr Tom Bygott - 17th Nov 2020

Coronavirus update Good progress is being made by several companies developing vaccines for SARS-CoV-2, the virus that causes COVID-19, and it is hoped that a mass vaccination programme can be commenced soon. The most at-risk segments of the community will be vaccinated first, starting with care home residents and staff, followed by all those aged 80 and over, and health and social care workers. The general population will follow, in bands of decreasing age, along with patients with certain medical conditions. The entire process will take many months, so it is important for young healthy people to remain patient and for us all to continue following official advice. A vaccine can greatly reduce the risk of catching the virus, but it isn't a treatment for those who catch the virus now. Advice, updated regulations and links to available financial support can be found at www.gov.uk/coronavirus. The latest details of business support packages that are being managed locally are at <http://tinyurl.com/SCDCBusinessCovidSupport>.

First electric bin lorry arrives The Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service – a partnership between South Cambridgeshire District and Cambridge City Councils has taken delivery of its first all-electric bin lorry. The new vehicle has five battery packs storing 300kWh of energy, supplying 200kW of power to its electric motors. It is substantially quieter than existing bin collection vehicles. Fully loaded it weighs around 26 tonnes and will typically take around seven to eight hours to recharge, easily completing a full day of collection rounds and returning to the depot with charge remaining in the battery. The Shared Waste service has around 55 diesel collection vehicles, using around 50,000 litres of diesel a month at a cost of approximately £55,000. Electric vehicles are not only more environmentally friendly but are easier to maintain as they have fewer moving parts. Battery technology has advanced to the point where, despite the distances between our villages, electric vehicles are now suitable for this role. I hope that this is the first step towards replacing all of the Council's diesel-powered vehicles.

Next steps for the Cambridge Autonomous Metro (CAM) The Cambridgeshire & Peterborough Combined Authority Board will consider the latest version of the CAM Sub-Strategy at its meeting on November 25. This has been updated following the successful public consultation that was held from May to July, in which the majority of responders supported the objectives. A new organisation, One CAM Limited, has been incorporated to deliver the metro, including its tunnels under Cambridge city centre. The Chairman of this new body is Lord Robert Mair CBE, a Professor of Engineering at Cambridge University and one of the world's foremost authorities on tunnel engineering. He has been involved in the design and construction of the Jubilee Line Extension, HS1, Crossrail and currently HS2. He also has international experience with metro projects in Amsterdam, Barcelona, Bologna, Florence, Hong Kong, Istanbul, Rome, Singapore and Warsaw. The Combined Authority is testing the market for technologies, innovations, designs, operational systems and commercial ideas which could enable the CAM to be delivered. An initial procurement phase, called a Standard Selection Questionnaire, was held in October and early November and a selection process has resulted in ten suppliers being invited through to the next phase, called an Invitation to Tender. Tenders from the current phase are due back on December 4 after which three top scoring tenderers are eligible for contracts to develop their conceptual designs in full. Three sequenced milestones – 'stage gate' reviews – will follow, ensuring that the best possible designs will be ready in March 2021. Also ongoing is work to determine the detailed route for the metro, taking over the existing guided busways and developing new routes to Waterbeach, Haverhill, Mildenhall and St Neots via Cambourne. Of the four tunnel portals that are required, the location of the Western Portal and

the route to Cambourne will be the most difficult decision, because of the high quality of countryside around Coton, Madingley and the American Cemetery. I support an extended underground route with a portal to the west of the Madingley Mulch roundabout. This is likely to be more expensive than a surface route but would be the best environmental choice, as it would preserve the best of our countryside and the settings of our villages.

Cllr Tom Bygott

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APPENDIX C

Chairman's Report

11th November 2020

We have received an unofficial report that our planning application is progressing well, does not need to go to the Committee and is hopefully to be decided this week. The Task and Finish group have met to progress the procurement process and Shahila is drafting a detailed project specification. Cllr Harford has identified a possible source of funding for the project and this will be followed up as soon as planning permission is in place. It may be necessary to separate some elements of the project into a separate project to take advantage of this.

The reintroduction of 'Lockdown' on November 5th meant that plans for the Remembrance services had to be curtailed. Our Rector, Reverend Bigg, took responsibility for conducting a brief service on the 8th which was live streamed via You Tube. Wreaths were laid informally and these were mainly in place before the ceremony.

Cllrs, Harford and Hickford have liaised with the County Council and the tenant of the land adjacent to Manor Farm road to progress the provision of an off-road equestrian route from the Gretton School entrance to the bridleway at Oakington Road bridge. It is anticipated that this can be achieved at fairly low cost. Development of the widened cycle/pedestrian path from New Road to the Oakington Road bridge is also progressing. Completed designs are said to be imminent.

A further road traffic incident near the former Language School, (now Gretton School, Rectory Campus), has alerted us to the planning application relating to changes to the site. We shall discuss these at our Planning meeting next week with particular reference to the need for improved vehicle access.

It is good to be able to report that repairs to the artwork fence and path are now complete. Thanks to the Town Charity for all their efforts in achieving this. A new quotation has been received for installation of bollards along the car park footpath which while less attractive than the verbal one which could not be confirmed, is nevertheless cheaper than that previously submitted by Mead. A promise of a quote from a local fencing company has not yet materialised. It is being pursued and will hopefully be received in time for resolution at next week's meeting.

We have received from a parishioner a comprehensive summary of the changes to Girton footpaths/rights of way as a result of the A14 upgrade works. The control orders relating to these expire in December and

he has urged that we should press for reinstatement wherever possible. Cllr Harford is looking into this and we shall discuss at next week's meeting.

Haydn Williams