

## **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 Tuesday 17th August, 2021, at St Vincent's Close Community Centre at 7.00 p.m.**

*Residents were invited to attend the meeting and to speak in the public open session at item 21/83.1*

**Present:** (Cllrs) Williams (Chairman), Buckler, Cockley, Dashwood, de Lacey, Muston, Rodger  
1 member of the public

**In attendance:** S Cumming (Clerk)

**21/80 Welcome from the Chairman** The Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**21/81 Apologies and Reasons for Absence** Apologies for absence had been received from Cllrs Godby, Kettle and Thorrold, and from County Councillor E Murphy and District Councillors Cllr T Bygott and Cllr C Garvie.

**21/82 Members' declarations for items on the agenda.** None.

#### **21/83 Public Participation session on agenda items and matters of mutual interest:**

1. Members of the Public. Dr M de Lima introduced himself, as he would like to be co-opted to the Parish Council at the next meeting. He has lived in Girton for 4-5 years, and is an Ecologist/Conservationist by training. He has been introduced to the Rewilding Girton group, and is looking at 'Doubling Nature' grants of £250-£1,000 to develop a Nature Recovery Plan. He is looking at the village and thinking what we can do to enhance biodiversity. Dr de Lima has agreed to lead Rewilding Girton moving forward assisted by Dr L Wilson.
2. County Councillor's Report. Councillors were requested to contact Cllr Murphy directly if they have questions or points they'd like to raise.
3. District Councillors' Reports. Councillors were requested to contact Cllrs Bygott and Garvie directly if they have questions or points they'd like to raise.
4. Police Report. No report this month.

#### **21/84 To confirm the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 20th July, 2021**

(previously circulated). Item 21/75.3 to be amended to 'one abstention'. With this amendment, the Minutes were proposed as a true record of the meeting by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr de Lacey and approved unanimously.

**21/85 Matters arising from the Minutes (for information only)** Cllr Dashwood had previously circulated former County Councillor Harford's information about discussions regarding parking on High

Street. There is potential for serious concern regarding possible accidents when 9-10 vehicles are parked there. It would be good for the school to come up with suggestions on how to take this forward as it is causing disquiet amongst residents. Taxis which wait all day could go to the other Gretton School site to wait. A system for monitoring is needed, to be brought to a subsequent Parish Council meeting. The Chairman has been in touch with the School Principal who has written to staff. There are a number of other places in the village where there is inconsiderate parking.

#### **21/86 Finance and Resource Management**

1. To approve the payments schedule to date this month (previously circulated). The payment for the repair to wooden railings was because at Girton Feast someone had reversed into the swing barrier and broken it, and a section of the low rail fence had previously been broken. Given the recent illegal occupation of public space at Bar Hill it had been decided to repair this as an emergency measure.

Proposed by the Chairman, seconded by Cllr de Lacey, and approved unanimously.

The Chairman explained that the payment for LXA Project Management had been made by BACS from Ipswich Co-Op Bank following a visit in person. It appears that setting up an online account with Co-Operative Bank can be done by email to the Business Banking section and the chairman will pursue this. Thanks were given to the Chairman for this.

2. To note any significant variance from usual levels of monthly income/expenditure. None.

**21/87 Correspondence (to be received)** Correspondence had been circulated by email.

#### **21/88 To receive reports**

1. Chairman's Report (*Appendix A*) The accountants are bringing the accounts up to date and an extraordinary meeting may be needed to approve the Annual Return. Four tenders have been received for the Pavilion building works, with a clear leader in Godfrey & Hicks. LXA will give a final report to recommend them. Godfrey & Hicks are a local company and showed a willingness to work with the Council to realise the project within budget. The timeframe will be longer than anticipated and we have asked if we can phase the work to minimise closure of the changing rooms so there is less disruption to users. Use of the changing rooms and hall will now be extended up to Christmas. An offer to Cotton Hall of £75 per week for use of office space was rejected by Trustees, so the Council will regroup and put forward another proposal. The Chairman wants to hold the St Vincent's offer as the whole process has been delayed. The see-saw has been repaired. An application has been submitted for a Zero Carbon Communities grant. The HR Committee has done good work, with one application for the Clerk's post received.

2. Girton Town Charity Report. No report this month.

3. Rewilding Girton (*Appendix B*) It was queried if Woody Green could be made part of the Rewilding Project, with volunteers to clear this area and Girton Parish Council to develop it next Spring. This will be taken forward with the Girton Green Team.

4. Pavilion Refurbishment Report. British Heart Foundation are to pick up the filing cabinets. The groundsman is to be prompted to fill the skip.

#### **21/89 Items which the Council need to discuss at the next meeting.**

Parking on High Street

Progressing the discussion with Cotton Hall regarding accommodating the Parish Office.

It was reported that a catalytic converter has been stolen in Girton Road following a number of similar thefts in Oakington.

The meeting closed at 7.40pm

## **APPENDIX A Chairman's Report**

### **11<sup>th</sup> August 2021**

August meetings do not normally merit full reports as we do not traditionally transact any business over the 'holiday' period. However as there some matters that need to be updated I am writing a brief summary.

Streets accountants undertook a brief review of the 20/21 accounts and reported that they will need to be brought up to date before the AGAR can be completed. Attempts to contact Coles Accounting to do this have been unsuccessful so we shall have to instruct Streets to do it. When the allocated individual returns from holiday next week we shall request that they proceed. The cost is likely to be an additional £400 but given that we have paid very little in accounting costs over the last 18 months this is well within our normal annual expenditure. The available time frame allows no feasible alternative and we shall need to call an extraordinary meeting to approve the Return when it is completed.

Attempts to set up online banking with Unity Trust continue to flounder. Despite almost daily contact they continue to fail to act upon our instructions. Payment to LXA is still outstanding and an attempt to pay by CHAPS from the Cambridge Building Society account failed as not being possible from our type of account! The Co-op have been requested to switch our account to online banking but fail to respond to email or telephone. I am currently trying to do something through their Ipswich branch but am awaiting a call back.....

The Pavilion refurbishment project continues to progress. Four out of five of the selected contractors returned their stage 1 tenders and these were reviewed individually in on-line meetings with them and LXA. Of the four, two had very similar costings for 'preliminaries' and time frame. Of these one had a more enthusiastic and collaborative approach to providing a design within budgetary constraints and is likely to be selected. Given that the overall construction period is now likely to exceed 40 weeks it is actively being considered how the work can be scheduled to minimise disruption to use of the changing facilities in particular.

The Vice Chair and I have looked at the possible office accommodation at Cotton Hall, explained that we have a cheaper but less suitable and convenient option at St Vincent's Close, but have again had our offer for hire of the space rejected.

Following the resignation of Shahila Mitchel from the Council I picked up the ZCC grant application work and obtained information and quotations for energy saving heating of the building. Infrared radiation panel heaters were clearly the best option and have been used widely in other village halls. The

application was made on that basis for a grant of £15,000 towards a total cost of about £25,000. A copy of the application will be included in correspondence.

The HR Committee has been very busy this month reviewing job descriptions and preparing adverts for the two vacancies we now have for the Clerk and assistant positions. Grateful thanks to them for their efforts.

Happily I can report that the see saw at the Pavilion playground has at last been repaired. It only took 18 months....

**Haydn Williams**

## **APPENDIX B Rewilding Project**

Report of an informal meeting held on 4<sup>th</sup> August, on Mayfield Green.

In attendance were: Jo Scones, Pam Manning, Julie and Alan Dashwood, Kay Green, Corinne Garvey, David Adamson, Marcelo Lima, Sandi Irvine, Mary Rodger.

Apologies from: Douglas de Lacey, Susie Cumming, George Thorpe, Martin Harnor, Nicola Gardner, Gill Cockley, Janet Sheard, Lucy Wilson

We are extremely fortunate to have Marcelo Lima joining our group. Marcelo is an expert in many areas of environmental concern, and is full of good ideas for ways forward. Marcelo and Mary will work together on the project, she will be happy to be led by his expertise on the best way to take this forward.

We began by identifying the aims of the project, which are: to improve the habitat for all wildlife, particularly insects, and especially bees; to add beauty to the village, which both residents, and those passing through, will be able to enjoy.

We still have the majority of the funds allocated to us by the Parish Council, and more funding may be available from the Co-op. We can apply for this next year if we feel the need.

We talked about the problems of rewilding verges. We recognise that some householders prefer to keep their verges neatly mowed, others are happy for them to go wild. The problem is that although wild verges are very pretty at some times of year, they are unsightly at others. Therefore we need to decide on a regime for mowing. It seems unfair to expect the mowing contractors to pick out individual verges along a street for mowing - they will want to mow the whole street or not at all. There are also long stretches of verge through the village which are not attached to any particular properties, and these would be ideal for planting with wildflowers. However it was recognised that this would be a huge project, needing a lot of manpower, so may not be possible at the moment.

We discussed what to do with the trial patch on Mayfield Green. Two options: we can strim it and ask for it to be mowed along with the rest of the green, then repeat the experiment next year. Alternatively we can continue to leave it to stay wild, and see what happens. We thought about whether to use plugs of wildflowers, whether to control the grass or accept that it is a grass meadow, and the practicalities of each option. We did not come up with a definite plan, so it will be left as it is for the moment.

Kay Green asked what people thought of the round bed which she and Janet Sheard had worked so hard to establish. It was agreed that although it was not looking its best at the moment, it was definitely worth while continuing, as during its full flowering season it was a magnet for bees and other insects, and a visual pleasure for the village. Hopefully now that the groundwork has been done, it will not be such a difficult task to keep it going for future years. I'm sure Kay and Janet would welcome help with the maintenance of this bed, so if anyone feels they can help, do let Kay, Janet or myself know.

We also discussed the area near the footpath at Woody Green, currently not owned by anyone but managed by the Girton Green Team. Although it would be good for rewilding, it is important to remember that many birds are nesting in the trees and hedges there, and ivy and nettles, whilst some may think are not very attractive, are extremely important for insects.

We agreed to meet again at the end of September. Date and venue to be decided.

The meeting closed at 6.45.

Mary Rodger

8 August 2021