

GIRTON Annual Parish Meeting

Girton Recreation Ground Pavilion

Cambridge Road, Girton, CB3 0FH

Wednesday 15th May 2024

Convened by Daniel Carney, Parish Council Chair

MINUTES

1. Welcome and Apologies for Absence

No Apologies for Absence, received.

2. Approval of Girton Annual Parish Meeting Minutes, 17th May 2023

Proposed by Cllr Carney. Seconded by Cllr Linton. Unanimous Approval.

3. Matters arising from Minutes of 17th May 2023 – None

4. Chairman's Report on the Parish Council's activities: Cllr Daniel Carney

Cllr Carney noted Council highlights of the last year:

- Successful LHI Application for 20mph extended beyond A14 Bridge to Huntingdon Road
- GPC support for CCC Schemes which are currently work in progress.
 - o Cycle Crossing at Girton Corner
 - o Cycle wands to be placed the Cycle Lane on Huntingdon Road
- LHI Application for double yellow lines around junctions in Girton.
- Bollards at Girton Recreation Ground Car Park
- Improvement of pavements in the village. This is now underway.
- Sports & Recreation: Wellbrook Bowling Green Facilities completed after many years. Basketball Court refurbishment initiated by students from Girton Glebe. Formal opening of 2 x new Table Tennis tables. Use of extra sports field owned by Girton Glebe and finally the resurfacing work on Wellbrook way playground.
- Successful of implementation by Cotton Hall and HIPC working together.
- Appointment of Master Planner. An ongoing project now in place to refurbish the pavilion and to review all GPC facilities to understand best value for money and potential usage of all our facilities.
- Trial of Parish Ranger has come to an end with many small fixes now made. Council has now approved the role full-time. The Full-time role to be advertised in next few weeks.
- Reporting Tool to allow residents requests to be immediately place on GPC Task List to facilitate better delivery and understanding of issues in the village.
- Finally, an itemised budget for GPC to allow staff team to work more quickly based on an approved budget for spend.
- Moving money that is needed for long-term projects into accounts with higher interest rates.

Cllr Marshall noted the large amount of work highlighted throughout the year.

5. Finance Report: Cllr Ann Muston

Cllr Marshall introduced Cllr Muston as chair of Finance & Resource Management and Human Resources.

Cllr Muston highlighted the amount of work carried out behind the scenes and thanked GPC Clerk/RFO for moving Council forward.

- Cllr Muston noted and explained the precept as part of the tax paid to SCDC that is managed by Girton Parish Council for their residents. GPC had kept this amount as low as possible. She noted the importance of the precept, and that GPC was now asking our residents their priorities for spend of that local tax.
- Cllr Muston asked GPC Clerk/RFO (Yvonne Murray) to explain the Annual Governance and Accountability Return (AGAR). She noted that this form confirmed the end of year figures for Girton Parish Council together with confirmation from the internal auditor that all Parish Council guidelines had been followed throughout the year. This is followed by the external audit.
- For budget setting from the precept Cllr Muston noted that this year GPC committees had signed off on their requirements. These requirements were then approved by Finance & Resource Committee and then Full Council.
- Cllr Muston also noted the need for better management and improvement of assets. She thanked Angie Vidler our facilities Manager who had been responsible for increase in use of GPC facilities to increase GPC income.
- GPC Clerk/RFO highlighted a slide which confirmed the recurring process of due diligence around budget settings, precept setting and submission of the AGAR. She noted that by following that process then GPC was able to consider more innovative projects and consistent asset management at best value for money.
- Cllr Muston reinforced the need for open transparent financial management with greater community engagement so that everybody's requirements are understood. She noted the key was people engaging and working together to get things done.
- Cllr Muston also highlighted the need to balance the budget and GPC's obligation to serve the entire community. She encouraged the Community to step up.
- GPC Clerk/RFO highlighted the need to get process and policy in place so that Council could increase their delivery for Girton. She noted the balance between due diligence and delivery would create an infrastructure to increase the speed of delivery. She noted GPC's wish to do more for Girton.
- Cllr Muston highlighted the amount of time some of these processes and tasks can take. She highlighted that all information reported this evening was on Girton Village Community website.
- Cllr Muston noted she had spoken to a relative of Jane Buckler, a former councillor who she felt would be really pleased to understand the Community Engagement that GPC was promoting.

6. Guest Speakers

a) Local Nature Recovery Group – Keith Honnor (Chair, LNRP Group)

Keith noted how great it was to see so many people.

Who are we: A bunch of amateur nature lovers who are keen to see Biodiversity recover in the village. Also, known as that bunch of 'Nature Nurds'.

Strategic Aims – working with community and supporting nature.

Objectives had been confirmed to allow LNRP to achieve the above

Objectives under three pillars - Sites: Priority Sites, Habitats, Species

Achievements to date:

- Hibbert Ware Garden with contributions from GPC, SCDC, Village residents
 - o Formal opening was a couple of weeks ago.
 - o Projects still ongoing
- Finalisation of LNRP with a Public meeting last year and another this year to update the plan.

- 'No Mow Summer', A little controversial after last year's 'No Mow May' which had a blank no mowing. This year there is a more nuanced approach where the areas of greater biodiversity can be found. In areas where there is not a lot of Biodiversity mowing will continue.
- Community engagement which is particularly important to the group. Eleven events had been held so far and these events will continue.

Next Steps

- Hedgehog Survey – Hedgehogs are now in decline. How many are there in the village? LNRP need your help. Keith appealed to the community for their help with confirmation of sightings.
- Moth Trapping Event in Girton College in June
- Bat Walk around Church and Pub areas in August.
- Looking at cross boundaries, nature does not observe boundaries. Encouraging collaborative work across neighbouring villages: Histon, Oakington, others.

Why does it matter? Why should we care?

- Government 'State of Nature' Report states that UK are in danger of losing 1 in 6 of our native species to extinction. A few years ago, it was 1 in 10 which shows the steep decline.
- More importantly even if you are not interested in world life or nature, Keith referred to a quote by Robert McFarlane - 'Are we being good ancestors, what right do we have to deny the people that come after us, the budding Chris Packhams and Megan McGovern's the right to enjoy nature, work with nature.'

b) Andrew Muston, (Neighbourhood Plan Lead)

Andrew noted that last year he spoke about why Girton was undertaking a Neighbourhood Plan. This year he was going to give an update on progress. He highlighted the pace of the project and that over the last year there was the SWOT Survey last summer through Girton Parish News which received 129 replies, 16% on paper and 84% electronically. In planning the main survey, the importance of paper copies for those residents who do not use online. The content in the main survey came out of the SWOT responses.

Strengths, there were two main areas:

- People valued facilities that do exist in Girton.
- Value the Community feel of the village.

Good place to live and we like what we have got.

Weaknesses:

- Poor Active Travel
- Limited Retail

Value what we have but there is not a lot of it.

Opportunities:

- More Retail
- Active Travel
- Better Buses
- Better Facilities

Biggest opportunities. The others are not being ignored but the above helped frame main survey.

Threats:

- Over development
- Traffic
- Loss of Natural World

The results from SWOT survey then framed the questions for the main survey. Andrew confirmed his Thanks to all who had helped in the delivery of the 1,921 surveys to each home in the parish for both Girton and Eddington.

Freepost and paper had been provided to encourage greatest response rate. You will see current response is 449 responses to date. In a survey of this type anywhere between 5/30% is deemed as good. He encouraged as many responses as possible to gather evidence to support drafting the plan. He noted the significant response rate using paper and the age range of respondents. Andrw highlighted the greatest response was to our junior survey sent to Girton Glebe and IVC. 106 responses had been received from Girton Glebe. The broadest response across ages was noted as being of great importance.

One of the questions was 'What would make Girton a better place?'. He highlighted some possible quick wins. The deadline of 31st May. The next step is to be data analysis and that the team will be going to external firm to ensure the oversight is as objective as possible. Post data analysis there will be a period of consultation where anything currently missing from the plan could be added.

Once the Consultation is over then SCDC will check and once this long process is over, there will be a referendum in the parish which will result (if successful) in a legally binding document which holds weight with planners, developers, landowners and residents.

Cllr Marshall encouraged everyone to

c) Richard de Horsey (Girton Memory Café)

Cllr Marshall introduced Richard who had kindly invited him to attend the Memory café. He noted that Richard had set up a wonderful monthly event which takes place at St Vincent's Close. Richard gave some background on the Memory Café which had been going for 13 years. He had originally seen the concept at a Rotary Conference and thought what a good idea it was. Richard noted his mum had dementia and started the café at the WI Hall, now pulled down. The Memory Café was themed, and they try to make it as much fun as possible. People can come with their family or carers. There are about 30 or so members. Unfortunately, there were caught by BBC who asked if the café members minded being filmed. They did not mind, and it was quite fun as no members had done this in front of a camera. Unfortunately, on that day there was the annual pantomime and Richard was dressed up as a pet ostrich which ended up on television. There is no charge as long as someone is accompanied by a carer. Everyone has a good time. The object is for people to join in. There is a singing group. Everyone comes from Girton including the helpers. Hoping to go on as long as able. St Vincent's close venue is comfortable, tea and coffee, biscuits and cakes. Theme every month.

The Memory Café is just good fun. Richard would be delighted for anyone to come along. They meet the first Friday of the month from 10am to 11am.

Cllr Marshall noted he had now been asked to join the team of volunteers as the human jukebox to get as many people as possible dancing and singing. He noted there was nothing quite like the

Memory Café. What Richard had created was wonderful. He noted the wonderful things going on in Girton. Some of these events would be shown on a slideshow to follow the formal meeting including the formal opening of the Table Tennis tables earlier that afternoon. Thanks to Cllr Nas Hayat.

Cllr Marshall then introduced our District and County Councillors.

7. Report from County Councillor: Cllr Edna Murphy (CCC)

Cllr Murphy noted it was really hard to follow the talks that we had all just heard. She said they were fantastic and of course this was a characteristic of Girton Parish Council.

She wanted to pay tribute to Girton Parish Council and that it was always inspiring to come and hear what GPC was doing and their forward thinking.

She noted the different levels of local government.

1. Parish Council with precept.
2. District Council with Planning and Housing
3. County Council who deals mostly with Social Care of all sorts. Over 70% of expenditure is spent on that care and everything else comes out of the 30% remaining budget.
 - CCC also have the Greater Cambridgeshire Partnership (GCP)
 - EMEA which is responsible for large area of transport strategy, bus services etc
 - CCC also deals with transport maintenance
 - Controversially also have a development company which has relationships with democratic structures.

She confirmed her report was available on Girton Village Community website. Cllr Murphy confirmed that this year work had been about the Budget and the extreme pressure CCC were under to set the budget due to the level of social care. The costs of Social Care are so high, the system is broken. Costs have risen astronomically, and this is a really serious problem. However, CCC did feel they had a balanced budget. She noted that Social Care costs framed everything that you do.

She noted that budget setting was similar to that of the Parish Council. To look at everything that was needed and to carefully set priorities such as Biodiversity, Active Travel etc while still supporting the very important area of social care.

She noted the annual survey ran by CCC which allows them to identify the needs and aspirations of their residents. One of the things that surprised them was loneliness and what that looked like. The classic example of loneliness was the epidemic of loneliness for young people. Support on this area is a significant priority.

Cllr Marshall highlighted the challenges that CCC was up against to ensure that the support of social care was in place, and they can continue to also address priorities and aspirations to improve.

8. Reports from our District Councillors: Cllr Corinne Garvie (SCDC)

Cllr Stobart presented a complex slide that showed the different tiers of local governments. He noted looking at the slide the different areas of responsibility of different areas of the Council. He asked that all local governments tried to present a united front and even if they did not know the answer was able to help signpost people to the right place.

Regarding SCDC he noted responsibilities of e.g. Fly Tipping, Waste Collection, noise complaints. Somewhat mundane? He noted however that the responsibilities of SCDC kept the atmosphere and character of the district.

He noted the Neighbourhood Plan for Girton which is a responsibility of SCDC. He thanked the Girton team for stepping up on this. He felt that a Neighbourhood Plan is a way a community can define what a village is to be in the future. The essential nature of the village. The plan can really help make Girton a good place to be and as much as possible within Parish control.

He reinforced the challenges of budget setting that Edna had highlighted. He noted investments made by SCDC which supported the ability to provide a good level of services.

He noted that SCDC loved Parish Councils who were pro-active. What happens e.g. Anti-Social behaviour the council on the ground at Parish level can provide feedback. One of the things at District Level is to engage Parish Councils in training to encourage them to be as effective as they can be.

He is looking forward to the stall at the Feast and the U-Bus actually coming into Girton. He noted the possibility of that service being extended and noted the interest in public travel to Histon. They were delighted to see the collaboration between Oakington and Girton on the Local Highways Initiative. This collaboration was at the moment almost unprecedented. He thanked Girton and Oakington for driving this forward.

Cllr Stobart noted he would finish on this point. 'Everybody loves Jack's Gelato'. If you were at the opening on the Hibbert-Ware Garden the biggest queue was for ice-cream. He noted that Jack's Gelato was now present at Manor Farm and that there would be a market garden developed to support the business. SCDC have offered support for that enterprise, and they would be absolutely delighted if this were the first of many business ventures. He noted small local businesses that small SME's developing in the business would be very helpful for local employment.

Cllr Marshall thanked Cllr Stobart. He noted the Slideshow that would be available after the formal meeting. It highlights a number of successes that have occurred in the village. Not all directly through the Parish Council but many are those that GPC supports. He noted that at the very heart of what Parish Councils do is to put the Wellbeing of the community first. That wellbeing comes from working together on shared initiatives. He hoped that GPC had shown everyone today that they are working interested in working together. If even more people can be encouraged to get involved, then he hoped that GPC would be able to show an even bigger slideshow of even more interesting initiatives and successes next year.

He wanted to finish on a few Thankyous. He noted that everyone in the room were important, and everybody was contributing to the village of Girton.

He wanted to especially thank those people responsible for this event so all the Councillors, Angie, the team. To Rowena Barnes for the amazing work on keeping the feast an annual momentous event and for provision of the drinks at this Annual Parish meeting.

He noted the people who had come to answer questions Cllr Giles, Keith Honnor, David Fryer and Alan Benton from Girton Bowls Club. Everybody had their stalls in place. He also introduced Lianne Toothill from Wilby & Burnett who was working on a project to underpin any Council initiative going forward. She was also here to answer any questions. He noted that it was a really exciting time and encouraged a round of

applause for the team. He also noted the afternoon's activities for the children which had been well-attended.

9. Questions and Comments from the floor

Cllr Carney asked if there were any questions at this stage. He noted there would be plenty of chance to ask questions informally over a cup of tea or a glass of wine.

There were no questions from the floor at this stage.

Meeting Ended at 8.18pm

DRAFT



ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

For GIRTON 2024

**William Collyn Community Centre
Wednesday 15th May 2024, from 7pm**

WELCOME

- Every English parish must have a parish meeting.
- The meeting consists of local government electors registered for the area. If the Chair of the Parish Council for the area is present, he/she **MUST** preside.
- The meeting must assemble between 1 March and 1 June and may be convened by the Parish Council Chair or by 6 electors for the area for which it is held.
 - A minimum of 7 days' notice of agenda must be given.
 - The quorum of a Parish meeting is 2.
- Decisions are taken in the first instance by a majority of those present and voting. The Chair, if an elector, has an original and casting vote, if not an elector, only a casting vote – voting does not need to be counted but can be based on overwhelming majority.
- A poll can be demanded not later than the end of the meeting on any question arising at it. Such a poll is held only if TEN or one-third of the electors present insist or if the person presiding at the meeting consents. The District Council would then be notified that a poll is required.
- In all but a very few cases, any decision reached as a resolution is “persuasive” only and may not subsequently be passed by the Council.
- The right of the parish meeting to discuss parish affairs extends to any public matter of a parochial nature and is **NOT** confined to the exercise of the statutory functions of the Parish Council.
- The press and public have the same rights of admission to parish meetings as they have to a meeting of the Parish Council. It is therefore advisable to set aside clearly marked places for electors and non-residents to avoid confusion when a vote is taken.