

MINUTES OF THE GRESSENHALL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON MONDAY 7TH SEPTEMBER AT 6:30PM ON THE GREEN

9769 Present: Councillor Beazley Councillor Crisp
Councillor Bunning Councillor Melton
Councillor Reader Councillor Saunders
District Councillor Duffield District Councillor Atterwill
County Councillor Kiddle-Morris

1 member of the public

9770 Accepted apologies for absence – Councillor Harris

9771 Declarations of interest – Councillors Crisp and Saunders declared an interest in Agenda item 10 to discuss parish council donation/investment in The Swan due to being Save The Swan committee members.

9772 Minutes 3rd August 2020 - The minutes of the meeting held on Monday 3rd August 2020 were confirmed as a correct record. Councillor Crisp proposed that the minutes be signed. This was seconded by Councillor Bunning and all councillors present agreed.

9773 Progress on items not on the agenda from previous meetings –

- SAM2 data – the clerk forwarded councillors charts showing the data in a more legible format. Councillors to review the charts in time for the next meeting. The sign has just been put up on Litcham Road so more data will be available for the next meeting.

The meeting was opened to the public for their comments at 6:35pm.

9774 Mr Begg updated the parish council on the COVID response group. There had not been any new calls over the last few weeks. It seems the buddy system has developed into friendships over the last few months. As cases are on the increase, residents need not be afraid to call the response group in the future. A reminder of the group with the contact number will be in the next News and Views.

Mr Begg also updated the parish council on the Save the Swan Campaign. £200,000 has been raised so far leaving a minimum of £30,000 to raise by the end of September. The group are not being complacent, encouraging investors to come forward sooner rather than later. The meeting was reminded that The Swan will not just reopen as a pub, but a community hub where groups can meet and providing ICT workshops, for example. The Chairman congratulated Mr Begg and his team for their hard work and success so far.

That being all the parish council meeting resumed at 6:45pm.

Matters Arising from the Minutes

9775 Update on COVID-19 – An email was received inviting parish councils to return any unused funding if they had no need for it. Following a discussion, it was agreed to hold on to the funding pro tem. As cases are now rising, there may be a need for the funding in the near future. This can be reconsidered at a later date. Councillors and residents were reminded to be aware of mental health issues during this time.

9776 Reporting of Highway Matters – Councillor Kiddle-Morris has reported to Highways the layby opposite Bunnings. This may be delayed due to staff absence. It was asked whether the pot holes could at least be filled in the layby if resurfacing is not possible at this time. A letter has been sent from Highways to the residents regarding the overhanging hedges near Dillington.

9777 Update on Affordable Housing Scheme – Hastoe are working on a Development Appraisal.

9778 Community Car Scheme Update – There were 4 hospital visits and 4 surgery visits this month.

9779 Update on The Swan Community Group and to discuss Parish Council investment/donation – Councillors Crisp and Saunders did not take part in this part of the meeting. The Chairman introduced the subject by confirming that s.137 of the Local Government Act 1972 gave us the authority to spend money “on purposes for the direct benefit of its area, or part of it, or all or some of its inhabitants”. The limit under s.137 is reviewed annually and is currently £8.32 per head calculated according to the electoral 888 register for

Gressenhall. Whilst the parish council has the General Power of Competence this would permit the parish council to exceed this amount. It was suggested that any direct investment should not exceed the formula in s.137.

A discussion took place around how the parish council has supported the village and its amenities including the play area, Church, The Green, the Social Club and the playgroup (before its closure). Although these amenities may not affect all residents, all residents benefit by making Gressenhall such a desirable village. The parish council fully support The Swan reopening as a community pub/hub. Councillor Melton said that the community group had gained momentum from day one, making people feel part of the community. He added that the next two to three years may be challenging, and the opening of a community pub/hub will be of great benefit to the village. All other voting Councillors spoke in favour of supporting the pub appeal by the parish council acquiring shares in the business. A discussion took place as to the level of support that should be offered possibly in proportion to the level of support in the village or at the level permitted under s 137 .

Councillor Melton proposed the parish council should contribute to the purchase by acquiring shares, leading by example and encouraging others to donate to reach the target as soon as possible. He proposed supporting in broad line with what is permitted under s. 137. It was agreed that the parish council would, post meeting, review / check the current spending limit and number of residents on the electoral register and then agree a precise sum to invest in shares in the pub .It was thought that the investment based on this formula would be in the region of £7000. It was also concluded that this level of expenditure was affordable by the parish council .

The subject of car parking was raised, specifically the opportunity to park cars herringbone style in the layby opposite the Bunning yard . This requires the agreement of The Green trustees and the parish council who lease The Green off the trustees. It was agreed that, with the approval of all concerned, the parish council could take on the task of moving posts back by a metre or 2 to make more space for parking for the benefit of all concerned including the shop, Reading Room and The Swan.

All councillors unanimously agreed in principle with the investment in the pub in broad line with s .137 and the work to improve parking on The Green. Clerk to speak with NALC to check for the correct procedures in this transaction.

Councillors Saunders and Crisp reengaged with the business of the meeting.

- 9780 Update on Registry of parish land – Nothing to report.
- 9781 Update of the Parish Partnership Funding – Awaiting contact from Highways.
- 9782 To discuss any Parish Partnership Funding requirements for 2021/22 – Any application needs to be made in December. Keep on agenda.
- 9783 Update on request for a memorial bench in the playing field – Nothing to report.
- 9784 To provide an update on Internet banking – Nothing to report.
- 9785 To discuss two neglected allotments and allotment rent review – One allotment has been handed back. This will be offered to the next person on the waiting list. No response has been received from the second allotment holder. Clerk to email to see if the allotment is wanted. It was agreed not to increase the rent this year. Clerk to write to holders requesting the annual payment.
- 9786 Update on the Horse Fair – Letters were sent to Breckland Council, Norfolk County Council and the Police. A response is due from Breckland's Public Protection Team.
- 9787 To discuss dog waste bins with bag dispensers – It was proposed whether dog bag dispensers could be available near dog bins. Following a discussion it was agreed not to provide dispensers.
- 9788 Update on Clerk's appraisal – The clerk met with Councillors Beazley and Melton for an annual appraisal.
- 9789 Update on letter to Northern part of the village – Councillor Beazley visited one resident following a response from the letter circulated.
- 9790 To discuss planning matters –

- Dale Farm Barn, Bushey Common – Variation of Condition no.2 – It appears this application has been withdrawn. Clerk to look into and feedback to councillors.
- Sunninghill, Common Drift – Variation of design – Councillors had no objections to this application. Clerk to report on the Planning Portal.

- 9791 Report from District Councillor Atterwill - Confirmed follow up of the Horse Fair letter.
- 9792 Report from District Councillor Duffield – Urged councillors to review the new planning white paper and log any comments by the end of September.
- 9793 Report from County Councillor Kiddle-Morris – Report was circulated to all councillors. Dates for free hazardous waste disposal days are Dereham 2nd, 3rd and 4th October.
- 9794 Approve August payments - Clerk salary and expenses - £305.19, HMR&C - £70.00, Gressenhall Community Car Scheme PC - £26.52, Gressenhall Community Car Scheme BC - £28.13, NGF Play Limited - £295.58, Norfolk Woods and Hedges - £348.00. Councillor Reader enquired if the parish council would like the monthly playground inspection to continue for the forthcoming year. All councillors agreed.
- 9795 Councillor Melton proposed payment of the above. This was seconded by Councillor Saunders and all councillors present agreed.
- 9796 Reports from councillors – Councillor Crisp requested a copy of the electoral register. Clerk to forward.
- 9797 Correspondence to be circulated to councillors (for information only)
- An email was received from a resident of Bittering Street with regard to their property flooding. Two emails were received from residents regarding noise complaints. It is thought that the drain may be blocked. Councillor Kiddle-Morris advised to contact Breckland as they deal with Highway issued in 30mph areas. Clerk to report and contact resident.
 - A letter was received from Bunnings Limited requesting permission to photograph machinery for marketing purposes on The Green, taking into consideration ground conditions. All councillors agreed to grant permission.
 - A resident of Rougholme Close contacted the parish council regarding the state of a piece of land. Councillors felt that the resident should speak to land owner.

In the absence of any further business, the meeting closed at 7:45pm. The next meeting of Gressenhall Parish Council will be held on Monday 5th October 2020. Venue and timing to be confirmed.

Signed: Councillor Melton

Date: 5th October 2020