

GREAT LIVERMERE PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Great Livermere Parish Council meeting held on Wednesday 20th March 2024 7:00 in Great Livermere Village Hall

Present. Cllrs H Johnston, R Charlton S Charlton A Norburn, Cllrs T Redman, A Johnston, & WS Cllr Speed

1. Co-option of new Parish Councillor

2. Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence received from SCC R Hopfensperger.

3. Members Declarations of Interest and Dispensations:

3.1 To receive declarations of interest from councillors on items on the agenda. Cllr T Redman declared an interest in item 13.2 on the agenda.

3.2 To receive written requests for dispensations for disclosable pecuniary interests. None.

3.3 To grant dispensations as appropriate under Section 33 of the Localism Act. None.

4. Minutes - - Minutes of Wednesday 17th January 2024 Parish Council meeting were agreed and approved as a correct record.

5. Meeting open to the public

SCC Operations Manager - Rights of Way and Access, Claire Dickson will provide an update to the Parish Council and residents regarding with the footpath at Ampton Water.

Claire Dickson SCC Operations Manager - Rights of Way and Access, came to talk to us about an update on options to resolve the closed footpath crossing across Long Water. Two members of our community joined us to express their opinions regarding this matter and we are grateful to them for their support. Claire shared with us that after a positive meeting with the Landowner's Land Agent, SCC are looking at four options that include replacement of the existing structure, diversion and two options that are shorter term solutions involving extensive works to the existing structure. Further investigation works are now underway. Claire Dickson will attend our next meeting in May to update us with any results of further investigations and hopefully a planned route forward. All stakeholders in this project are currently committed to finding a solution to re-open this right of way.

6. Report from County Councillor: R Hopfensperger.

To include any update on traffic calming measures and replacement signage/stickers.

Cllr Hopfensperger was unable to attend the meeting but reported that she has processed the application for the safety signs and linings, and she is just awaiting an installation date.

7. Report from B. Councillor: A Speed.

Cllr Speed reported that there will be an option to comment of the devolution consultation soon. Further information about this is recorded under item 8.2.5. Full council will be meeting next week, and the Local Plan should be finalised. Cllr Speed was keen to hear the Councils thoughts on the use of Glyphosate on weeds in the Councils area. The Councillors agreed that this was something they would like to have further discussions around especially as they are in the early stages of developing a biodiversity policy. (see under item 8.1.4) Cllr Speed ask the Councillors to consider if they would like any funding in the new financial year. The state of the skirting work on the path opposite the village hall was revisited. Cllr Speed said he would pick this matter up again and see if he can get the path cleared, to a more satisfactory level. Following a discussion with Cllr Redman, Cllr Speed said that if, a PV scheme was going to be considered in the village, he would offer any help that he could.

Action Cllr Speed

8. Progress reports. For information, from:

8.1. Chairman

8.1.1 To discuss option for a Parish council Facebook page.

The problems of using Facebook to respond to posts, as an individual, when expressing Parish Council views, was discussed. The only way to avoid this would be to have a Parish Council Facebook page. After discussion the majority of the Parish Councillors did not feel that they were supportive of a dedicated Parish Council Facebook page at this time, however it was agreed that we would revisit this item at the next meeting. **Action Clerk**

8.1.2 To discuss introduction of annual review discussion with Clerk.

The Chairman and Clerk had a discussion about the development of an annual review document for the Clerk. The Chairman is working on a document and Cllr S Charlton is happy to be involved as part of a working party to take forward this initiative. **Action Cllrs H Johnston/S Chalton**

8.1.3 To discuss recommendation that councillors have dedicated email addresses for PC business.

There is an ambition to make Parish Councils work in a more secure and effective way by using .gov email and website addresses. Unfortunately, there is a considerable cost, particularly for smaller parishes, involved in this. A .gov website domain is £138 for 2 years and it is £24 per email address for a .Gov email address. At this time, it was considered that this would represent too big of an outlay for this service. It was agreed that all the councillors would set up a glpc.gmail address for Parish Council use as a compromise. **Action All**

8.1.4 To discuss option to develop a biodiversity and environmental policy.

The Clerk shared an example of a Biodiversity document for the Councillors consideration. Taking into account comments made under Cllr Speeds item it was agreed that the use of Glyphosate was something that needs to be explored further. This will be included in works on the document that Cllrs Redman and A Johnston will carry out. **Actions Cllrs Redman/A Johnston**

8.1.5 To discuss community involvement opportunities and explore options.

It was agreed that in a bid to engage more with the residents of Gt Livermere we will produce a newsletter/questionnaire. This will be delivered to and collected from all the properties in the Village. Ideas for items for inclusion will be explored further at the next meeting. **Action All**

8.1.6. To discuss Councillors training needs and the need for up-to-date training record.

It was agreed that we would set up a training register to record training and development. Cllr Redman has completed pt 2 but still needs to do part 1 of the Councillors Basics. Cllr H Johnston would like to undertake the Chairmans training, when a suitable date becomes available. Cllrs R & S Chalton would like to sign up for the Councillor basics training. The Clerk will look in to organising this. **Action Clerk**

8.2 Clerk:

8.2.1 To review and update as required: Standing orders, Financial Standing orders, Risk Assessment, Asset Register, Code of conduct and Clerks contract.

The Clerk circulated the above, updated documents for review. The Councillors were happy with all the documents.

8.2 2 To give feedback on the WSC conference.

The Clerk attended the recent West Suffolk Council forum. Unfortunately, she did not feel that it was up to the normal standards of past conferences with the venue not really meeting the needs of the event and too many items being on the agenda, meaning there was very limited time for questions or networking. There was a discussion about Emergency planning with Ben Wilding A presentation on Housing and homeless and a presentation from SCC highways. This was mainly focused how much funding they receive and how the funds are spent. We raised concerns over the reporting tool. We were told SCC Councillors have access to more detailed information

and that they would be looking at improving the tool moving forward. Questions, requested to be submitted ahead of the conference were not answered but we were assured that we would be provided with a written document covering the answers soon.

8.2.3 To discuss opportunity to get a free portrait of King Charles.

There is an opportunity to receive a free portrait of the King. The Chairman has spoken to the Village Hall and they would be happy to receive the portrait. The Clerk will arrange for a copy to be supplied. **Action Clerk**

8.2.4 Confirmation of Councillor contact details on website.

The Clerk will arrange for the new email addresses to be updated on the website once they have been set up and confirmed. **Action Clerk**

8.2.5 To receive feedback on Devolution webinar.

The Clerk attended a webinar on the Devolution deal being considered by Suffolk County Council. She has concerns that some of the money in the deal is not indexed linked, which could potentially result in less money in the future. Also, an elected mayor could be in contrary to the Councils political alliance, the mayor could then make a cabinet of chosen members not reflecting electorates votes. Below is some further information about the proposal.

- The Government currently controls where and how certain funding is spent in Suffolk.
- In December 2022, Suffolk County Council signed an in-principle agreement with the Government to transfer some of that control and funding to Suffolk:
- Level 3 deal
- Additional funding
- More local decision-making
- Greater profile and influence with Government

This is part of the Government's Levelling Up agenda.

Additional Investment Fund worth **£16m** per year for 30 years, not index linked.

Local control of **£9.4m** Adult Education Budget each year, not index linked.

£5.8m one off funding to develop brownfield housing sites

£3m one off funding to expand Suffolk's Greener Homes 0% Loan Scheme to improve energy efficiency and renewable generation.

An integrated multi-year transport settlement

Control of £9.4m annual Adult Education Budget from 2025 (currently centrally allocated)

Responsibility for commissioning adult education in Suffolk:

- Better targeted
- Closer, more focused collaboration with business and other partners
- Focus on the skills we need in Suffolk.

Suffolk County Council's leader would be directly elected by residents.

First election in **May 2025** in line with next county council elections

No new levels of bureaucracy:

- The directly elected leader would be part of Suffolk County Council
- Existing decision-making arrangements would apply.
- Devolution is a journey, not a one-off event.
- Experience shows devolution opens the door to greater powers and funding over time.
- 4th level of devolution already announced offering multi-year funding and more influence.

A public consultation on the proposed deal will launch in March 2024, giving residents and businesses an opportunity to have their say.

8.2.6 Litter pick

The litter pick was confirmed as 13th April, meeting at the War Memorial at 10.30am. the Clerk will arrange for any litter collected to be picked up by West Suffolk Council. **Action Clerk**

9. Grass cutting arrangements 2024/25

9.1 To confirm arrangements for the village grass cutting 2024/25.

The Chairman and Clerk met with the new grass contractor to confirm the areas and the frequency of cuts. It was agreed that he would be asked to do the first cut after Easter. We will aim for 10 cuts per season and Cllr A Johnston will liaise with them about the first cut and will let them know when we want the irregular items cut, i.e. the footpaths and churchyard. Cllr A Johnston will monitor the frequency and effectiveness of the grass cutting by the new contractor.

Action Cllr A Johnston

10. Finance.

10.1 The following account were approved for payment/noted as receipts.

Type	Supplier / customer	Account name	Net	VAT	Total
Payment	Jeff Wells	Bus shelter	-£20.00	£0.00	-£20.00
Payment	Community Heartbeat Trust	Defibrillator	£135.00	£27.00	£162.00
Payment	Administration	Various	£452.03	£0.00	£452.03
Payment	Barningham Parish Council	Vicki Gay	-£75.00	£0.00	-£75.00
Payment	Administration	Various	£247.54	£0.00	£247.54
Receipt	Barclays Bank	Compensation	£50.00	£0.00	£50.00
Receipt	HMRC	VAT Repayments	£269.48	£0.00	£269.48

10.2 To discuss and agree arrangements for additional checks for online payments.

It was agreed to change our process to check payments and receipts. In addition to the Clerk setting up the payment with the bank and a Councillor authorising the payment, a third member will check the documentation and sign off on the paperwork at the meeting. This role will be rotated amongst the Councillors. This meeting the accounts were checked by Cllr A Johnston. At the next meeting they will be checked by Cllr A Norburn.

Action Cllr A Norburn

10.3 Bank reconciliation and accounts update.

The Clerk provided a Bank reconciliation, schedule of payments and accounts update for the Councillors' information.

10.4 To confirm completion of internal audit review.

Cllr Redman has completed in internal audit review with the Clerk.

10.5 To confirm details for Internal Audit

The Clerk has made arrangements, with SALC, to carry out our audit this year. It would appear that this is an online service, and the Clerk was unsure of how much work this could potentially generate.

Action Clerk

10.6 To discuss investigation into a suitable savings account for PC reserves.

The Chairman and Clerk have been investigating better investment options for the Parish councils' funds. Our current bank, Barclays offers an interest rate of 1.5%. Unity Bank, an organisation the Clerk is familiar with and who specialise in Community banking, offer a much better rate, starting at 2.77%. they do command a fee but, even taking this in to account they would offer a much better return on any funds held. The Clerk has again experienced, time consuming, issues with Barclays and it was agreed that we should start the process of moving over to Unity bank. The Clerk will explore this further, and it will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

Action Clerk

10.7 To confirm submission of Precept request.

West Suffolk Council confirmed receipt of our precept request of £9365 as agreed at the January meeting.

11. Highway/village matters

11.1 Update on highway matters to include:

The ANPR device is due to come to the village in June. We will need to remove our device to enable this. As discussed under item 6, Cllr A Speed is arranging for the footpath, opposite the Village Hall to be cleared. **Action Cllr A Speed**

11.1.1 To receive any VAS updates, to note repair to VAS post and erection of solar device. The solar panel has been installed and is working well. It has at present, been running for five and a half weeks, without any need for charging.

11.2 Footpath issues. To include 11.2.1 Problem with bridge at Ampton waters. See under item 5.

11.3 To discuss options for Chapter 8 training.

All the councillors are potentially interested in receiving training that would allow them to operate on the highway. There are currently no dates available for the training. The Clerk will continue to pursue this, potentially having some training just for her Parish Councils. **Action Clerk**

12. Play area

12.1 Play area report, circulated.

There are a number of items on the recent play area report that need work and could potentially be undertaken by the Councillors and any volunteers willing to get involved. These include in the main cleaning of the area and equipment. An appeal will be made to see if anyone is willing to help. The Clerk will try to arrange for a local company to visit the site, when they are visiting Troston to look at other works that need to be undertaken. The Clerk will liaise with Cllr A Johnston regarding works to be done. **Action All**

12.2 To note any works required/completed.

An exercise to grade the works will be carried out by Cllrs Redman/A Johnston.

Action Cllrs Redman/A Johnston

12.3 To discuss option for routine playground inspection course.

Due to the cost of the course this was not considered to be a viable option at this time. We may revisit this idea if West Suffolk stop carrying out their free monthly inspections.

13. Planning Matters to include any applications/decisions received since the agenda was posted.

13.1 DC/24/0273/LB | Application for listed building consent - a. removal of existing porch and insertion of door b. refurbishment of windows c. replacement render d. repairs to chimney and additional internal and external alterations, 13 Bury Road Great Livermere. The Councillors raised **No objections** to this application.

13.2 DC/24/0200/TPO DC/24/0200/TPO | TPO 348 (1973) tree preservation order - three Horse chestnuts fell; one Horse chestnut prune by up to three metres over dwelling and telephone lines | Old Rectory The Street Great Livermere. The Councillors raised **No objections** to this application.

13.3 To note recent consultation on the West Suffolk Local Plan

It was noted that, following previous discussion, no comments were submitted in response to this consultation.

14. Councillors reports and items for future agendas.

No additional items.

15. Correspondence for action/information

15.1 Arthritis Action - Free presentations and groups. Noted.

15.2 To note Connecting Communities information for community transport. Cllr H Johnston out this information on the noticeboard.

15.3 SALC Survey. Noted.

16. Date of next meeting. 15th May 2024 7.00pm Annual Parish meeting to followed by the Annual Parish Council meeting.

16. To consider the exclusion of the public and press in the public interest for consideration of the following items:

16.1 Personnel Issues.

16.2 Legal Issues. None.