

# Greatham Parish Council

Minutes of the meeting of Greatham Parish Council held at  
Greatham Village Hall on Monday 1<sup>st</sup> June 2009 at 7.30 p.m.

**Present** Cllrs A Bridgman, A J Booton, A Ascherl, A Fellows, P J Larner, and C A Rudd,  
Also present Mrs A Rozario (Clerk)

**097/09 Apologies for Absence** None

## **098/09 Chairman's Announcements**

The Chairman pointed out the fire escapes in the event of a fire.

**099/09 Declarations of Interest** None

## **100/09 Public Question Time**

It was **RESOLVED** that the meeting be adjourned for 15 minutes in order for the Councillors to discuss topics with members of the public.

Mr Jerrard referred to the letter the Parish Council has received from Mr Williams of the Audit Commission. He said that the Parish Council should still refuse to pay the bill and complain about the way the complaints were dealt with. He said the Audit Commission were not entitled to charge and no report was sent to save money. All correspondence should have been discussed by the then parish council and reported back to the Audit Commission. The Parish Council do not know what their conclusions are on the matter. Mr Jerrard feels that it is a complete waste of the parishes money and urges the parish council not to pay the invoice.

Mr Lewis agreed with the points made by Mr Jerrard. He too feels strongly and is personally going to be writing to complain to the Audit Commission. He did not feel the Audit Commission were fit for purpose and it has not done its job. Mr Lewis will copy his letter to the Parish Council.

**Standing orders were then reinstated.**

## **101/09 Approval of Minutes of meeting held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009**

**PROPOSED** by Cllr Booton, **SECONDED** by Cllr Fellows, with all in favour. **RESOLVED:** the Minutes of the meeting of the Greatham Parish Council held on 11<sup>th</sup> May 2009 be approved and signed as a true and correct record.

**102/09 Matters arising from the Minutes** There were no matters arising.

## **103/09 Reports from County Councillor**

County Councillor Cartwright reported that he would not be standing at the next County election, due to take place on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June and he wished the Parish Council all the best for the future. Cllr Booton thanked Cllr Cartwright for his support.

## **104/09 Reports of Representatives**

### (a) Coryton Almshouses

Nothing to report. The next meeting is to be held in September.

### (b) Village Hall

Cllr Larner attended the Village Hall Committee meeting on the 18<sup>th</sup> May. He reported that the village hall will close between 14<sup>th</sup> September 2009 and the 18<sup>th</sup> December. The Parish Council will apply to the Church and the Primary School to use their facilities. The Village Hall Committee are going to approach 4 builders for quotes.

The Village Hall Committee will meet again on the 26<sup>th</sup> June and hope to have a proposal to put to the parish council at the July meeting.

**Cllr Redman arrived at the meeting.**

Cllr Lerner confirmed that a working party had been set up to look at the way the Village Hall Committee raises invoices. Cllr Lerner feels this could be improved and is going to give them some guidance.

The Village Hall Committee are looking at needing to spend around £1,000 on replacing the windows at the nursery. Cllr Lerner would like to be reassured as to the finances of the village hall, before the Parish Council gives any further money to them.

Cllr Lerner also commented that the Village Hall Committee were awaiting the Parish Council's response regarding the dissolution of the charity. Cllr Bridgman thought that this was no longer required as their own paperwork covered the dissolution. Confirmed that the Clerk would check the situation.

(c) HALC

Nothing to report

(d) The Old Church Committee

Cllr Bridgman confirmed that a meeting was to be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> June. Cllr Booton asked that the hedge cutting be addressed and it was confirmed this would be discussed at the next meeting.

(e) Transport and Highways

The Clerk reported on a telephone conversation with Christopher Patey of the Highways Department at Hampshire County Council. The points raised were as follows:-

1. There will be more 30 mph repeater signs through the village.
2. Church Lane does not appear to have speed limit. This would either have to be 30 mph of de-restricted. If 30 mph then repeater signs would have to be placed every 250 metres on alternate sides of the road and no further than 400 metres between each sign on the same side of the road. These signs would be 1.5 metres high.
3. Forest Road. There are oversized signs along the stretch before the bridge and these are to be replaced by the correct size and an extra set put in before the bridge.
4. Longmoor Road. The repeater signs have been positioned on the lamp posts and this is no longer allowed so these will have to be replaced. Also the first repeater is not close enough to the end of the road and so this will need to be moved a bit closer.
5. Digby Way. The signs that are on the island in the middle of the road need to be moved as this is no longer acceptable. A further de-restriction sign will need to be put up and also a further 30 mph sign. The lamps which are above the signs will be removed.
6. Selborne Road. For the time being it is proposed that the advance warning signs are all replaced by yellow backed signs. The large chevrons on the corner are also to be replaced by yellow backed signs. Red anti-skid markings are to be put on the road as well as SLOW signs painted on the road. This area is at present a 40 mph limit and it is proposed to change this to 30 mph. A black box will be placed along the road sometime in June to monitor the speed traffic is travelling at.

Cllr Bridgman also reported on a letter received from Highways Department of Hampshire County Council regarding Woodland Cottages. The Parish Councillors were not happy with the response from the County Council. Cllr Redman suggested a site visit so that they can see for themselves how dangerous it is. Cllr Ascherl said the site visit should be in the evening when the parking was at its worse.

Mr Lewis said that pulling out of Todmore is a problem and fears it will lead to a head on collision.

**RESOLVED:** The Clerk will write to HCC disputing their letter and reiterating the problem at this point. Will also request a site meeting and for a representative to attend the parish council meeting to answer questions. Cllr Lerner said he would be happy to help draft the letter should the Clerk require.

(f) Footpaths and Tree Warden

No further news. It was confirmed that the stile behind Todmore had still not be re-erected. The Clerk will chase Kate Fryatt of Hampshire County Council.

(g) Planning Committee

Cllr Booton reported that a planning meeting was held on the 28<sup>th</sup> May 2009 regarding Fern Farm and the Parish Council were writing to East Hampshire District Council to object to this application on the grounds that the extended family were not of gypsy status. It was suggested that a template be made for residents to be able to make comments, but Cllr Booton suggested that this was not a good idea. Cllr Cartwright also agreed that it would be more effective if residents could write in separately.

Cllr Bridgman recommended that everyone should write in with their personal comments.

Mr Jerrard confirmed that the matter only goes to Planning Committee if the Chairman requests it. He also confirmed that a certain number of objections will trigger the matter being heard before the Planning Committee. He requested that the Parish Council make such a request.

(h) Playground Committee

Cllr Bridgman confirmed that the drainage works had been completed and they appear to be working. Also confirmed that Hand Made Places had completed the works and their invoice can now be settled.

**105/09 RFO report**

Cllr Bridgman read out the RFO report and the balances on the accounts were as follows:-

Reserve Account	£49,301.73
Old Church Account	£1,134.87
Current Account	£242.93

The Insurance policy was now due for renewal and Cllr Bridgman confirmed that the Clerk had obtained two quotes, one from the Parish Council's present insurers, Allianz in the sum of £1289.68 and another from Norwich Union in the sum of £1286.60. The clerk confirmed that a further £80 would be payable on the Norwich Union quote to cover the parish council for fidelity guarantee as requested by the Audit Commission. Cllr Bridgman confirmed that he recommends the quote from Norwich Union. Cllr Larner compared the quotes and said they were very alike and the Norwich Union quote might also cover fireworks, which would assist GVEC in their organising of the fireworks in November. The Clerk would clarify the position regarding the fireworks cover. A vote was then made on the insurance quotes. **RESOLVED:** The Parish Council would obtain insurance cover through Norwich Union with all the parish councillors in favour **EXCEPT** Cllrs Larner and Redman who declared an interest as they are both on the committee for GVEC.

The payments to be made this month are:-

Clerk's salary	£420.00
Clerk's expenses	£30.88
Hampshire Playing Fields Assoc.	£20.00
Hand Made Places	£381.80
GVEC grant	£500.00
Norwich Union Insurance	£1,286.60

**PROPOSED** by Cllr Fellows **SECONDED** by Cllr Redman that these payments are made and a transfer request for £2,600 be made. The transfer letter for £2,600 was signed by Cllrs Redman, Larner and Rudd. The above cheques were signed by Cllrs Bridgman, Booton and Ascherl.

**106/09 Correspondence**

(1) Letter received from The Audit Commission dated 22<sup>nd</sup> May 2009. Cllr Bridgman read out this letter in which it states that the costs charged for investigating the complaints made by members of the public were kept to a minimum and the charging rate for 2007/08 was £234 per hour. Cllr Bridgman said the Parish Council should decide whether they pay this invoice or carry on arguing the point.

Cllr Larner asked what exactly the Audit Commission do and how they are funded. If the Audit Commission is government funded why is the Parish Council paying again through

the precept. Cllr Lerner did not think the Parish Council should be charged for the residents requests to the Audit Commission.

Cllr Booton said a letter of instruction should have been sent to the Parish Council from the Audit Commission advising them of their terms. As this had not been done, they were not engaged by the Parish Council and the money should not come out of the precept. He also stated that £234 per hour was not best value for money.

Mr Jerrard wanted to make the point that it was not the whole of the last Council that he had made complaints about, Mr David Rudd, who was on the Parish Council at that time was excluded from these complaints. Also Mr Jerrard added that the Audit Commission should inform the complainants of the outcome of their investigations. He himself has not received any such letter.

Cllr Booton added that before engaging any business transaction, quotes would always be collected before any costs are to be incurred.

Cllr Bridgman proposed the Parish Council writes asking for a copy of the letter of instruction and dispute the costs.

Mr Lewis said that a number of complaints had been made and the answers given in March 2008. One issue raised was the PAYE of the locum clerk. The Audit Commission were informed on several occasions that the locum clerk was self-employed and they should have picked up on this point. The Audit Commission are chartered accountants and are not doing their job correctly.

Mr Jerrard said that the Parish Council had paid the Clerk's PAYE tax twice (totalling approximately £500), as he was paid gross and then his tax was also paid by the Parish Council.

**RESOLVED:** The Clerk will write to the Audit Commission asking for a copy of the letter of instruction, disputing the invoice and refuse to pay the amount of £920.00.

- (2) Cllr Bridgman read a letter received from the Village Hall Committee showing their support of GVEC. No reply necessary.
- (3) Cllr Bridgman read a letter from Mrs J MacDonald of GVEC clarifying the issues made at the last Parish Council meeting. No reply necessary.

#### **107/09 Any Other Business**

- (i) The Clerk had received an email regarding the broken bin at the playground area. EHDC do not have any new replacement bins at the moment. However they could offer a second hand bin at a cost of £70 plus £50 installation charge. It was agreed that an attempt would be made to mend the existing bin by Cllrs Booton and Redman.

Cllr Lerner said he believed that the Parish Council owned some black metal bins which EHDC are holding. The Clerk will enquire as to where these bins are.

- (ii) The Clerk requested that the Parish Council set up an account with Blackwell Press in Liphook. This would assist the Clerk in obtaining photocopies and could also purchase the printer ink from them. A credit limit was set at £100 per month. **PROPOSED** by Cllr Lerner **SECONDED** by Cllr Booton.

#### **108/09 Any Other Business for Next Meeting**

Cllr Lerner asked that the financial request for the village hall be added to the agenda.

#### **109/09 Date and place of next meeting**

The next full Parish Council meeting would be on Monday 6<sup>th</sup> July 2009 at 7.30 p.m. in Greatham Village Hall.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.00 p.m.