

**Graveley Parish Council's Meeting
Tuesday 15th December 2015 at 8pm
Held at Graveley Village Hall**

Present: Chair Jack Rigg (JR) Vice Chair Cheryl Peers (CP) Financial Officer Steve Firth (SF) Tony Bracey (TB) . Hilary Napier (HN) and NHDC Sal Jarvis (SJ)

Members of the public were also present

Apologies – HCC Tony Hunter. NHDC Cathryn Henry and PCSO Heather Burrows

Declarations of interest- none

Approval of minutes - The Minutes of the 17th November 2015 were approved and signed.

Matters Arising

a) Derek Jerrard District Service Agent from Ringway responsible for North Herts and Stevenage Districts at County Hall Pegs Lane attended the meeting and suggested that the GPC could provide him with a 'Wish List' of works that could be carried out on the Highways in the Parish. Whilst it was not certain that any low priority problems would be solved, awareness of such issues will be noted when prioritising his works schedule for 2016/2017 and could be undertaken should higher priority work be undertaken. It would be helpful if all GPC members could put in their input for the clerk to send early next year.

All

1)Highways Report

Jack Rigg

a) Accidents- More accidents were reported by residents this month given the frequency JR drafted a letter for the Clerk to send to Robert Gordon (leader of the council), Terry Douris (portfolio holder for Highways), HCC Tony Hunter, NHDC Sal Jarvis and Cathryn Henry. A reply was received from Robert Gordon -*Thank you for your recent letter regarding accidents at the North Road/Graveley Road Junction, which I have read with care.*

Road safety is, of course, a very high priority for the council which is why we draw on the analysis of accidents to determine if there is some inherent problem with the road layout, signage, etc, that might have contributed to the problem. I am not familiar with the incidents to which you refer but, as you say, those who have had access to the analysis seem to have concluded that the cause was driver error.

Nevertheless, as your Council is unconvinced by this and concludes that there are measures that could be taken to reduce risk, I am very happy for the Cabinet Member for Highways to ask officers to review the data and your suggestions. He will doubtless liaise with your local county councillor over this. Helpfully, you have already copied these two colleagues (Terry Douris and Tony Hunter) into your e-mail to me, so it remains for me only to ask Terry to reply to you substantively once his officers have had the opportunity to reflect on your comments and proposals. Clerk to chase up up if necessary.

JT

b) Church Lane Potholes-Whilst some patching of the numerous pot holes has been carried out, one very large one has been missed. JR advised he had contacted Trevor Ward who said that the issue was being taken up by his boss Derek Jerrard. JR has contacted Derek and is awaiting a reply

The problems were also mentioned to Derek Jerrard who was at this meeting who said he would investigate. (see a above)

c) Local Plan

Tony Bracey and Peter Brace and, Jack Rigg for GPC meet with Richard Jukes, his boss and Caroline Danby for SBC and David Hill for NHDC to learn of details of SBC's Local Plan, which has subsequently been made public. The Public consultation for the Local Plan (LP) starts on 6th January and runs to 16th February.

The meeting focused on that element of their LP that affected Graveley. The proposals remain much as they did in their previous consultation, the housing target remains at 7,600 and includes a development of 800 houses (HO3) on the site north of Stevenage to include a primary school (flexibility exists within the plan to accommodate children from the NHDC development should this be required) and local shops. Development on the valley shoulder next to the area designated as Forster Country will not be aggressively developed and be aspirational in nature.

The one disappointing piece of information to come out of the meeting was SBC's intention to locate an 11-16 pitch travellers site on land opposite the Cygnet Hospital (HO12). Police have ruled out an expansion to the existing Travellers site at Dykes Lane due continued violence between the two extended family groups currently on the site.

Currently two employment areas for light industrial activity have been identified, one between the rugby club and Fox Homes and the other on land to the west of A1M Junction 8. At present land occupied by the rugby club will go to housing (150 homes). Land which the garden centre occupies (TC11) is being designated as Food retail (supermarket, 7,600 square meters), with planning proposals for the latter invited from 2018 onwards. Attached is an annotated map of North Stevenage detailing SBC's proposals

There was also some discussion on SBC's proposals to enter into discussions with neighbouring authorities to amend the current Green Belt to provide for the future growth of Stevenage post 2031. This perhaps is the greatest threat to Graveley.

Lastly at a previous meeting Richard Jukes confirmed that SBC's development is on a standalone basis, it does not require the NHDC proposed development and discussion about a joint development have not taken place. Statements by NHDC that the development around Graveley is required to facilitate SBC's development are not true.

SBC seem well advance with their plan and conversion of a number of previous office buildings in the town centre is well in hand. The vision entails creating a "Café" shopping culture/ environment, with some 2,500 homes in the town centre (recently approved Matalan Development for some 530 dwellings in a 13 storey building). Redevelopment of the Leisure Park to include an element of housing development is also envisaged in the future.

d) Retaining Wall 2 and 4 High Street- JR has spoken to Trevor Ward who advised it has been agreed that the wall needs some remedial work. JR to find out when this work will be carried out.

JR

e) Graveley Neighbourhood Plan- JR to speak to Stuart Izzard to find out what is required to put such a plan in place and what benefits might accrue to the village..

JR

f) Street Lighting- the two Street lights in Turf Lane are obscured by overhanging foliage Trevor Ward Local Network Technician at County Hall Pegs Lane emailed JR-*will generally only cut back a small amount of foliage from around the lamp heads but it is clear that the trees and bushes require proper maintenance. We have checked and these trees & bushes are not highways, can you contact the owners requesting them to cut back their trees and bushes.* JR to follow up

JR

2 Planning.

Tony Bracey

a) The George and Dragon-The Planning Application for the retention of the Gazebo and the Walk In Cold Store have been approved by the planning authorities. TB advised that in the Delegated File Note the following was stated - *Ward Councillors were consulted and both Cllr (Mrs) Jarvis and Cllr Henry responded stating that they would not be supporting the Parish Council objection.*

3) Financial Report

Steve Firth

a) Bank Account- Our current and reserve accounts now stand at £16,468.07

4) Playground

Cheryl Peers

a) Playground Inspection- Clerk has written to Andrew Bunker at CPM asking if he would consider continuing with the Playground Inspections, which he has agreed to do.

5) Any Other Business -none

6) Matters Arising

a) Book Exchange Scheme- CP has investigated the possibility of running a book lending scheme now that the Travelling Library Service has been withdrawn, together with a local resident she has looked into the possible venues. Herts., Library Service have agreed to supply, free of charge, 100 books. The Village hall was considered but owing to hiring commitments this was not possible. The other possibility is using St. Mary's Church which the Church Wardens and Rector have agreed, the Church would provide, at a cost towards Church Funds, refreshments. The other outlet was having shelves in the Bus Shelter this was considered but all agreed this would not be suitable. CP will continue with her investigations and report back if GPC can be of further help.

b) Police Crime Figurers - In Church Lane between 8.30pm on Friday, 30th October and 4pm on Sunday, 1st November offenders broke a rear door to gain access. Once inside offenders carried out a tidy search and stole items including jewellery.
ASB was reported at a local pub.

c) Kissing Gate- SF received a quote from Shanahan Contractor for a new Kissing Gate or repairing the old one, which GPC agreed was the best option, for £527.00 plus vat. Clerk to raise the order for SF to approve asking for a schedule of when the work could be carried out.

JT

d) Filing of Paperwork Policy-Clerk contacted Toby Le Sage at NHDC who emailed- *I will review your request and I'll arrange for some guidance to be provided to you as soon as possible.*

JT

e) Clerks Petty cash Float-Clerk requested that his float should be increased to £100.00 which was agreed by GPC members (see 8c below)

7) Correspondance Received- (see 6b above)

8) Cheques Issued

a) Clerks Petty Cash £154.34

- b) Alan Eaton mower service/repairs £114.24
- c) Increase of Clerks Petty Cash Float £50.00

The meeting closed at 9.20 pm

**The next GPC meeting will be at Graveley Village Hall
On Tuesday 19th January 2016 at 8 pm.**

**The Graveley Parish Council wishes everyone a very Happy Christmas
and a prosperous New Year**

Note map re Stevenage local plan is on page 5

