

GREATFORD

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Tuesday 16th May 2023 at 7:30pm

at the Village Hall

Present

Cllrs Phil Britton, Jason Halsey, Natalie Pretsell, Gemma Taylor and Tony Barker. Helen Britton (Clerk), Nigel Ashby, Rod Campbell, Elaine Hawins, Ann Sumner, Lois Webb.

Opening of meeting

Cllr Phil Britton welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for attending.

Apologies for absence

Cllr Vanessa Smith, Ibis Channell, Chris Granville-White, Alison Horton, Richard McDermott.

Approval of Minutes from APM May 2022

Proposed by Cllr Phil Britton and seconded by Cllr Tony Barker.

Chair's report from Cllr Phil Britton

Introduction

The preceding year has been one of stability and consolidation for the council with all of the councillors and the clerk staying in post for the year. The existing council was re-elected following the recent local and parish council elections.

Planning

A number of applications for planning have been received and commented upon by the council with Cllr. Tony Barker looking at the proposals in detail.

However the main planning concern in the preceding 12 months has been Mallard Pass solar farm with this process moving forward to the full development consent order (DCO) application and examination starting today.

The Parish Council, our Flood Warden (Chris Granville-White) and the community have been engaged in the process so far with many parishioners submitting written contributions to Mallard Pass' own consultation as well as relevant

representations to the planning inspectorate. I would like to record the councils' thanks to Sue Holloway and the other members of Mallard Pass Action Group for their help and support to the council and community in these endeavours.

The council will continue to voice the concerns of the Parish regarding this proposal over the next few months as the examination of the application by the planning inspectorate continues.

Community Assets

The playing field enhancements have bedded in well and all of the play equipment is in good condition having passed its annual inspection with no significant issues reported. It is anticipated that further upgrades / maintenance will be required and the council is budgeting to accommodate this as it becomes necessary.

Rabbits and moles continue to dig up areas of the playing field and the council has deployed appropriate control measures as necessary during the year. Some minor remedial work (filling in holes) has also been carried out.

Highways

Cllr Jason Halsey has formed a community speed watch group with 12 volunteers trained to record / deter speeding in the village. Numerous one hour speed watch events have been held. The results are providing useful data as to traffic volumes at different times of day with between 1% & 2% of the monitored traffic found to be speeding (even with CSW signs clearly deployed).

Nigel Ashby continues to move the radar speed sign around the village to assist motorists in moderating their speed (thank you Nigel).

Cllr. Natalie Pretsell has made some enquiries regarding better signage of the speed limits in the village. Further efforts to reduce speeding in the village are being explored by the Parish Council.

The roads surrounding the village are for the most part in a reasonable state of repair following a program of pothole repairs though more are appearing, particularly along the edges of roads where HGV and other traffic has eroded the edge & verge.

There has been an increase in the number of HGV's using Greatford over recent months, specifically quarry traffic and pallet network trucks associated with businesses along King Street. Councillors have also engaged with Cemex about quarry through their West Deeping quarry liaison group regarding quarry traffic but on most occasions the trucks associated with this business are not the ones using the village.

The village footpaths continue to be well used by locals and visitors alike. Those in the immediate vicinity of the village have been maintained by volunteers taking the initiative and with the help of Bob French our community cleaner (thank you Bob).

There was some engagement with the Ramblers association and the Lincolnshire footpaths officer regarding the routing of the footpath to Barholm which is slightly different on the ground to the definitive footpath map. This has yet to be resolved.

Community activities and events

The village celebrated Queen Elizabeth the second's diamond jubilee with a community picnic in the village hall (with thanks to the VH committee) and the planting (in the winter) of a sapling oak tree as part of The Queen's Green Canopy Initiative (thanks to Nigel Ashby for donating a healthy oak sapling for this purpose).

The village hall and playing field hosted a very successful summer play scheme for the children of (or associated with) the village. 20 children per day enjoyed a total of 15 days of fun provided by Finding Fitness which was fully funded by a lottery grant. Thanks to Cllr. Gemma Taylor, Alison Horton and Helen Britton for their efforts in securing the lottery funds. The aim is to repeat a similar scheme in summer 2023.

Flooding

There were no flood events affecting the village in the preceding year. Our Flood Wardens and a group of willing volunteers continue to be active ensuring that the water courses through the village are free of obstructions so that water can move through and away from the village unimpeded.

Chris Granville-White's experiment with the lowering the datum on the sluice by 10cm so that it opens earlier and moves water away more quickly is working well. When we have experienced periods of heavy rain during the winter the cut seemed to fill up earlier than the river, moving the water safely away from the village. However it has become clear that the datum needs to be raised in the summer to ensure enough water is in the river to prevent stagnation in some areas when water levels are very low.

Summary

Greatford continues to be a great place to live though there are some significant challenges to village life that need to be confronted. The Parish Council is looking forward to doing all it can to maintain and enhance our beautiful village and village life.

Financial report from Cllr Jason Halsey (RFO)

Reclaimed VAT of £381 has been received. The account holds £6700 (unconfirmed due to issues with Natwest Bank and not having received up-to-date bank statements.)Funds are in a very good position. The Annual Return (AGAR) will be may before the end of June and the budget for the next financial year will be set.

Report from the Chair of the Greatford Village Hall Management Committee from Richard McDermott, Chair of Greatford Village Hall Management Committee

Greatford Village Hall has had a very successful 12 months, with thankfully fewer moments of concern throughout the year, and the Hall returning to full use following the COVID lockdowns and their consequences.

In terms of the physical building, the hall remains in a good condition and has not suffered from any damage such as the storm related roof damage of the previous year. We have completed our fire risk assessment and completed most of the works required, with a few small works remaining to be completed in the coming months. We are also investigating the laying of new flooring in the back room, which has seen the addition of some new storage units enabling us to keep the room much clearer and tidier.

Seeing the hall full to the rafters at several events this year has been a real highlight, with the Live and Local events being incredibly successful once again. We have had three events in the last 12 months through Live and Local – Three Men in a Boat, Holmes and Watson the Farwell Tour and the magnificent Daniel Smith Blues Band just this last week – all very well attended and all incredibly well organised by Alison Horton. The standard of these events is very high and we will look to continue to bring more live performances to the village where we can. Thanks once again to Alison for all her amazing efforts, doing everything required throughout the year to make these events happen.

The Hall also fulfilled its critical role as a village venue for this year's royal events, hosting the Platinum Jubilee party (wet!) and the Coronation Party (sunny!). Both events were well attended by villagers and their guests.

The much-loved Barn Dance was also back in 2022 and Elisabeth Beckett and her family and friends did an amazing job of hosting and organising a great event attended by over 80 people. The Barn Dance will be held again this year on the 7th of October so please do book your tickets again through Ticket Source.

Other bookings remain at a reasonable level, and we continue to have regular bookings from the dog training and fitness classes which provides a steady and valued income to the hall's funds. We have also had bookings for village meetings and elections, musical rehearsals, birthdays and other parties, art classes, and most recently a regular tai chi class. The Hall was also used over the summer for the incredibly popular summer play scheme for local children which will be happening again this summer.

The Hall therefore remains in good financial health for another year, and we have retained a healthy overall income and level of contingency funds retained in our deposit account. More bookings are always of course welcome and encouraged, but it has been great to see the hall well used throughout the year by so many different groups and people.

Thanks to Margaret Anderson for all her hard work as Treasurer this year. She has kept the village hall accounts superbly again as ever. Margaret is sadly standing down at our next AGM in the summer, and we want to say a massive thank you for all her years of

hard work as Treasurer and on the Committee. We are therefore looking for a new Treasurer as well as new Committee members from the Parish. If you are interested in becoming a committee member do contact either myself or Alison Horton.

Thanks as well to all the Committee Members and our Trustees who have done so much to help run the Hall, both through their contributions at meetings but also the hard graft and support they have given in ensuring the hall remains a safe and well-run building, and in setting up, organising (and tidying up after) so many events this year. Your efforts and inputs are always incredibly valued – thank you once again,

Close of meeting was at 7:45pm

To be followed by the Annual Parish Council Meeting