

# GAZELEY PARISH COUNCIL

## Minutes of the Meeting of Gazeley Parish Council held on Tuesday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2021 in Gazeley Village Hall at 7.30pm

**Present:** Cllr Kevin Grimwood (Chair) (KG), Cllr Paul Beard (PB), Cllr Ray Francis (RF), Cllr Wesley Heaton (WH), Cllr Pat Spillane (PS), Cllr Robert Connelly (RC), and Cllr Judy Moatt (JM).

**In attendance** Lynne Francis, Parish Clerk, and 5 members of the public.

The meeting was opened by Chairman Cllr Kevin Grimwood who welcomed everyone to the meeting and indicated the exit routes from the building in case of an emergency.

<b>21.11.1</b>	<p><b>Public Forum</b></p> <p>Churchwarden Simon Gash raised an objection to a comment in the clerk's report in the draft minutes of the October meeting where she had noted that <i>'a letter had been received from churchwarden Simon Gash with regard to his appeal for funding to deal with unforeseen expense in connection with tree works and the repair of the churchyard wall.'</i> She had noted that his letter had been forwarded to councillors for their consideration. Mr Gash was of the opinion that she had misrepresented the contents of his letter and had furthermore replied to him before the council had discussed it.</p> <p>In his letter, Mr Gash had informed the clerk that Moulton Parish Council had donated the sum of £1250 towards the maintenance of their churchyard, the majority of which is not regularly mown and left as wild-flower meadow. In her reply, the clerk had pointed out that Moulton's precept was £32,000, in contrast to Gazeley's which was £15,800 last year. Therefore their contribution was in fact lower in proportion.</p> <p>Prior to the writing of the letter, Mr Gash had attended meetings of the council on two previous occasions and had requested that in addition to the parish council's donation of £800 towards churchyard maintenance this year, the council might make a further one-off payment to help with the cost of tree works, repair of the churchyard wall and the repair of the church's mower. He also observed that the donation had remained at £800 a year for some time and suggested that the council could consider increasing the size of their donation.</p> <p>The parish council had informed him that they would consider the request when determining the precept for 2022-2023 but no allowance had been made for further payments in this year's budget.</p> <p>In her reply to Mr Gash, the clerk had suggested that the church might make a direct appeal to the village for donations towards the extra churchyard maintenance costs as she had been involved in fund-raising for the church for many years and knew that the church held a prominent place in the heart of the village and of its residents. Mr Gash complained that he found this remark condescending and patronising.</p> <p>A second resident rose to support Mr Gash and asked to be informed of the balance of the parish council's accounts. It was suggested that the clerk had acted outside of her remit and therefore owed Mr Gash an apology. He then went on to instruct the parish council at some length on their responsibilities towards residents of the village. He was supported by councillor RC who accused the clerk of abuse of the processes of the parish council.</p> <p>Mr Gash rose again and continued to compare the situation in Gazeley to that of Moulton and at that point the chairman reminded him that he had already exceeded the three minutes allowed for comments</p>
----------------	--

	in the public forum. Nevertheless, he continued with his statement and there were further attempts and requests to interrupt the rest of the meeting from the floor.
<b>21.11.2</b>	<b>Reports from External Bodies</b> No reports were received this month. Cllr Noble had sent apologies and the chairman confirmed that Cllr Dicker was unavailable this evening.
<b>21.11.3</b>	<b>To receive apologies for absence.</b> All councillors were present at the meeting.
<b>21.11.4</b>	<b>To receive declarations of interest, pecuniary and non-pecuniary, in matters on the agenda.</b> None declared.
<b>21.11.5</b>	<b>To approve the minutes of the meeting of GPC held on Tuesday 12<sup>th</sup> October 2021.</b> The minutes were approved unanimously and signed by the chairman.
<b>21.11.6</b>	<b>Clerk's Report on outstanding issues and any correspondence to be brought to the attention of the parish council.</b>  The clerk confirmed that the new solar-powered speed device had been ordered from Elan City. Cllr Noble has confirmed that he will donate £1171.60 towards the cost and had raised an order with Suffolk Highways for the supply of two new posts to hold the equipment as they had to be of a larger diameter than the ones we have at present. The posts will each hold a solar panel and the device will be moved between the two. The parish council will be responsible for the cost of the posts.  Since the last meeting, postman Warren Knight, who was being moved to another area, had been presented with a Civic Pride Award for his outstanding support for the residents of Gazeley over the past 11 years.  The clerk has purchased a wreath from the Royal British Legion which Cllr Judy Moatt will take to the church on Armistice Day on behalf of the parish council.  A resident had complained about the presence of rats at the forge site. The clerk had confirmed that a demolition order had been placed on the property and that the site was sealed until it can be made safe.
<b>21.11.7</b>	<b>Finance</b> Authorisation of outstanding payments. The clerk presented the monthly finance report which is attached to these minutes. Cheques were signed by Cllr Beard and Cllr Judy Moatt.
<b>21.11.8</b>	<b>Highway Matters</b> As the purchase of the new speed device had been discussed earlier, there was nothing further to add.
<b>21.11.9</b>	<b>Planning Matters</b> To consider the following application: <b>DC/21/1934/FUL</b> – One new dwelling adjoining 14 Mill View, Gazeley. No objections were raised to the application.
<b>21.11.10</b>	<b>Blacksmiths Forge</b> To note the serving of a Section 215 notice for the demolition of the building. The owner has until 23 <sup>rd</sup> November to appeal and if there is no appeal then the building will have to be demolished within six months of that date. It was suggested that the PC might ascertain the value of the land and the likely cost of the demolition of the building. This was agreed.

<b>/contd.</b>	Since the serving of the Section 215 Final Notice, the building has been put up for sale.
<b>21.11.11</b>	<p><b>Councillors' Reports</b></p> <p>JM noted that residents had been dumping general rubbish at the site of the bottle bank. Local residents had cut back the hedge at the front of Highwood Court after requests from the clerk for WSC to cut it back had had no effect.</p> <p>She also noted that there had been no meetings of the Village Hall Committee since the first lock-down had been imposed.</p> <p>An observation was made that under the terms of their constitution as a charity, they were obliged to hold at least two meetings every year.</p> <p>The clerk was asked to write to the committee to remind them of the fact.</p> <p>RF referred to comments made during the public forum and noted that no-one on the PC had objected to the clerk's letter to Mr Gash when they met last month. He also said that the parish council did not need reminding of its obligations to residents as the members always take their interests into account. He also noted the aggressive tone in which the comments had been made from the floor. As for the clerk's suggestion that the church might appeal to the village for extra funds, he referred to the time when he had run the football club in the village, saying that they had never sourced donations from the parish council but had raised the funds to purchase changing facilities themselves.</p> <p>WH had carried out a survey on the parish assets and said that there was nothing major to report except that there was a hole in one of the grit bins but a repair was not urgent at the moment. Everything else was in good order.</p> <p>PS, as the owner of the Chequers, asked whether it was in order for him to post a menu on the notice-board. No objections were raised and the clerk confirmed that the left-hand section had usually been reserved for village notices with the other side being used for parish council matters.</p> <p>He confirmed that he is still working on the refurbishment of the Three Churches Walk sign.</p> <p>KG asked whether it was necessary for the PC to meet every month and whether it would be in order for it to meet every two months in future. It was agreed that this should be discussed at the Annual Meeting in May.</p>
<b>21.11.21</b>	<p><b>To confirm the date of the next meeting of the parish council.</b></p> <p>The date of the next meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 14<sup>th</sup> December 2021 in the village hall.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 8.25pm.</p>
	<p><b>Finance Meeting</b></p> <p>To consider the budget and determine the parish precept for 2022-2023.</p> <p>Members were given a copy of an outline budget and the actual payments made for the year so far. The clerk estimated that total spending for the year would amount to approx. £15,500, within budget, although it is likely that the energy bill will rise substantially.</p> <p>It was noted that Suffolk Highways had upgraded its streetlights and the parish council is well aware that some of the parish-owned lights will soon need replacing as the lamps become obsolete.</p> <p>It was suggested that the clerk ask for a lighting survey to identify those most at risk of failing in the near future.</p> <p>WH noted that we had planned to install white gates at the three main entrances to the village until the offer of a grant for the purpose was withdrawn last year. He felt that we should still go ahead with the plan if at all possible and obtain quotations for the cost of the gates and for the installation by Suffolk Highways.</p> <p>WH also asked whether there was a way of creating a revenue stream for the playing field.</p>

	<p>Although we cut the grass, the field was not used to its full potential at present. The clerk confirmed that if the field was made available for sports clubs in the area to use it there would have to be changing facilities available.</p> <p>Dalham Estates had previously advised that it would be fine to accept a small payment to offset maintenance costs but anything else would have to be approved by them.</p> <p>It was noted that there was a classroom pod at the school site but it was felt that the cost of moving it could be considerable and it could even disintegrate if it was moved by crane.</p> <p>PB noted that grants were available for sports facilities and that we should obtain some information on the different types of buildings available with costings.</p> <p>It was felt that the playground equipment is in a good condition at the moment but the gate does need looking at as it still doesn't close properly.</p> <p>There is still the question of the Blacksmith's Forge and the possibility of the parish having to step in financially at some point as all the surrounding land is owned by the parish council. It was felt that no decisions can be taken until we see how events unfold next year.</p> <p>It was agreed that the parish council should obtain costings for all of the above and discuss the budget further next month. We have until the end of January to submit our precept form.</p> <p>The meeting closed at 8.51pm.</p>
--	---

**PAYMENTS & RECEIPTS****NOVEMBER****2021**

Payments	Amount	Cheque No.	Receipts	Balance
	£			
Mr R Wybrew	280.96	1228		
	£			
L. Francis, printing ink	31.00	1229		
	£			
L. Francis, wreath 11.11	20.00	1230		
	£			
L. Francis rent of office Apr-Sept	104.00	1231		

**Receipts**

	£
Interest	0.16

	£	£
<b>Totals</b>	<b>435.96</b>	<b>0.16</b>

**Balance of Accounts**

	£
Treasurer's Account 1	6,376.08
	£
Treasurer's Account 2	80.43
	£
Instant Access Account	17,860.06

	£
<b>Total Balance of Accounts</b>	<b>24,316.57</b>
<b>at 11.10.21</b>	

9.11.21