

Girton Parish Council

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The Pavilion
Girton Recreation Ground
Cambridge Road, Girton
Cambridge CB3 0FH

Minutes of the Girton Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 19th November 2008 at St Vincent's Close Community Centre 7.30pm

Present: Cllrs D de Lacey (PC Chairman), S. Clift (Vice Chairman in the Chair), J Ford-Smith (Vice Chairman to 164), E Bullman, V Godby, R Martin, M Wilson, J Thorrold, M. Taylor, R Gordon, P. Starling, L Sparling, C Starling, R Hiley (from 155/2).

Action/Power

In attendance: R Stone (Clerk); Mrs N Stone (PFO)

08/153 Apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Cllrs L Starling, R Martin, R Hodgkinson, & Cllr Reynolds (CCC).

08/154 Members' declarations of interests

None declared.

08/155 Open Session for Public

Cllr Clift proposed to suspend Standing Orders, seconded Cllr Wilson, carried unanimously.

1. **Members of the public** The only issues were raised were under 08/155/2 as noted below.
2. **Presentation by Keith Miles, Planning Manager SCDC, on the proposals for the "objection" site adjacent to NIAB.**

Mr Miles explained that SCDC had been invited by the Planning Inspectorate to see if enough land had been put forward to meet the Government target of 20,000 new homes. There was a shortfall of 2,200. Six plans were now being submitted by the Council to address this. Five rural centres had been identified. The aim was to build as many houses as possible on the edge of Cambridge. This necessitated the need to include "objection" sites. The one nearest to the village of Girton was adjacent to NIAB land and currently part of the green belt separating Girton from Cambridge. SCDC was also looking at university land within its NW Cambridge plan, and 2 or 3 parcels of land at Arbury Park.

The core strategy was to houses in the most sustainable locations near to jobs, schools, and services. In the first instance these would mean developments on the edge of Cambridge followed by Northstowe by 2016. SCDC had considered a large number of sites as part of this process, and was now out to public consultation on its proposals until 12th December 2008. Responses could be made on line, or on paper. A form was available for completion. All the responses would be considered by SCDC with the aim of making recommendations to the Cabinet meeting in the second week of February. SCDC would then respond to the Planning Inspectors. He advised that the Planning Inspectors may hold a further round of examinations. A final decision would be made in the middle of 2009.

Councillor Questions

Cllr P Starling asked whether there could be a reassessment after 2010 because of the Northstowe development being delayed.

A. The Northstowe delay had been caused by planning issues, and the downturn in the market. The Inspectorate would not seek to allocate housing on the basis of the current market conditions.

Cllr Ford-Smith asked how big the gap would be between Girton and Cambridge if the NIAB "extra" site was developed.

A. Approximately the width of a football pitch. More exact advice would follow by email.

Cllr Taylor considered that this proved it was pointless to work on numbers. Town housing

urban sprawl was against government policy. It caused pollution. Sensitive development in villages was more viable.

A. SCDC had for a number of years employed a policy of diversity in villages but rural communities still lost facilities as people shopped in superstores. This was the first time that greenbelt was seriously adjusted in this area since the 1960s. Current thinking was that those who were living on the edge of Cambridge would be closer to services.

Cllr Hiley was concerned about the concept of sustainability. Girton's primary school is full, and the journey to secondary schools is difficult. Any development on the NW of Cambridge is not going to be supplied with facilities. Couldn't the NW university site be brought forward? If not the Cambridge greenbelt will leapfrog over the "necklace" villages with the effect of extending Cambridge.

A. Planning policy has been to ensure continuity of the necklace villages as part of the Lifetime Plan to 2021. Villages should also remain separated from the city by greenbelt.

Cllr de Lacey asked what was needed to make the Council change its mind? Will the Planning Inspectorate decide from the list of sites?

A. An objection site strategy was necessary. Every objection site in the district had been considered. There were not many opportunities around the edge of Cambridge. There was not a lot of mileage in extra land around Northstowe. An alternative strategy was possible. Girton could put one forward.

Cllr Godby queried the standard of new housing. The Housing Association had found this to be a problem at the new development at Wellbrook Way.

A. Housing Associations require housing to be built at a higher standard than the private sector which only have to meet building regulations, and build houses of saleable quality. SCDC had no powers regarding standards.

Questions from members of the public

Q. What about access to the Huntingdon Road?

A. The development company that has an option on the site has produced plans based on this being an extension of the city. Kings Hedges Road may be extended. No road through greenbelt was proposed.

Q. Is there pressure to make decisions within a tight time frame?

A. SCDC has been working on this since Easter. The six week consultation was normal. If the target was not met the Planning Inspectorate would decide.

Q. Any new development would be likely to create severe drainage problems.

A. Drainage was considered in depth.

Q. Huntingdon Road traffic does not move during morning rush hour now. It will become worse when the non objection sites north of the village are built. If the objection site is built as well it will add to the problem.

A. The development will have its own primary school, secondary school and shops. Cambridgeshire CC will consider bus services. The downside will be minimal.

Cllr Hiley advised that the road junctions were already very dangerous. If 2000-3000 people move into this part of the Huntingdon Road the road will become even more dangerous and cyclists will stop riding into Cambridge.

3. **Police Report** A written report was received from PCSO Karen Mahoney. Cllr Godby gave a short report on the police consultation meeting she had attended. She was concerned that crime reports were not being regularly received. Girton would be getting its "beat" officer back.
4. **County Councillor's Report** A written report by Cllr Reynolds was circulated in advance to

Councillors.

5. **District Councillors' Reports** Cllr de Lacey's report was circulated in advance of the meeting. No report was received from Cllr Bygott.
6. **Girton Town Charity** Cllr Hiley reported that the Abbeyfield, a care home charity for the elderly, had arranged a meeting in the village on 27th November to outline its plans for a new development on the Wellbrook Way site.
7. **Girton Youth Works** Cllr Hiley reported that the Youth Leader, Darryl McMurray, was ill. This was delaying discussions the YMCA about future provision of Girton Youth Works after next year. Whilst this youth work was appreciated there were a number of issues that needed to be resolved
8. **Footpaths and Rights of Way** No report was received

08/156 That Standing Orders be reinstated and the Council meeting resumed.

Proposed Cllr Clift, seconded Cllr Gordon, unanimous.

08/157 (i) That the unconfirmed Minutes of Parish Council meeting held on 15th October 2008 be signed by the Chairman as an accurate record

Cllr Godby proposed, seconded Cllr Ford-Smith

Cllr Clift signed the minutes on behalf of the Parish Council.

(ii) Matters arising from minutes

Item 08/143.5 - Plastics recycling (*also see 08/165/3 below*)

Cllr de Lacey reported he was in touch with three plastic recycling companies. Due to the current economic downturn the recycling market had dropped reducing the possibility of retaining a plastics container on the recreation car park.

08/158 To receive the unconfirmed minutes of the Committees of the Council

The minutes of the Planning, Environment, Sport & Recreation, Finance & Budget Committees were received.

08/159 That the Council appoint a Task Group to assess and respond to the NIAB Extra Consultation.

Proposed Cllr Clift Seconded Cllr Ford-Smith

A group was needed to identify the implications for the village of this additional development of 920 houses, look at the evidence, and make a response on behalf of the Parish Council. Cllr Wilson agreed to take the lead. Cllr Ford-Smith volunteered to assist. Councillors were invited to contribute. The motion was passed. Unanimous.

08/160 That the Council appoint a Working Committee led by a Councillor to take forward works on Town End Close in accordance with advice given by Natural England.

Following discussion it was agreed to refer this issue to the Environment Committee.

08/161 That the Council approve the expenditure of up to £700 for a computer, and software for the Parish Office.

Proposed Cllr Clift seconded Cllr de Lacey. The motion passed with one abstention.

Clerk

08/162 That the Council approve an extension to the Parish Council insurance policy to cover Members and employees for personal accident at an extra cost of £34/annum.

Proposed Cllr Clift, seconded Cllr Godby. The motion passed with one abstention.

PFO

08/163 That the Council approve expenditure recommendations from the Sports and Recreation Committee:

- i) 08/142 Pavilion Hall floor: resurfacing and resealing of hall floor
Anderton & Groom £1214 (S & R budget – Pavilion maintenance)
- ii) 08/144 Monkey Bars: disassembly and removal of Logworld monkey bars from the Recreation Ground play area including making good safety surface to aid future replacement of play equipment . Fenland Leisure £750.
(S & R budget – Play equipment maintenance)

Proposed Cllr Godby seconded Cllr Wilson.

Cllr Wilson, Chair of the S&R committee, explained that 08/142 represented the best

value in so far as it was the cheapest of the three quotes, and the company's work was known to be of high quality. The recommendation for 08/144 was not the cheapest. All were equipped to remove the Monkey Bars which were reaching the end of their working life. Fenland Leisure was the only company that could repair the "carpet" play surface and make it safe pending installation of new play equipment in the future.
The motion passed. Unanimous.

Clerk

08/164 That reports from Parish Councillors be received.

- Cllr P Starling reported continuing problems with buses. Recently the driver of a No. 6 had missed the turning for Girton on the Huntingdon Road and continued north on the No. 5 route. When passengers complained he did a three point turn, and continued through Girton.
- Cllr Ford-Smith raised concern about noise from the A14. Help was needed with research.
- Cllr Taylor reported he was fully recuperated.
- Cllr C Starling was worried that the jetting of the drains on High Street and Cambridge Road had started and stopped. He was advised this would take several months.
- Cllr Wilson said he should like to gain informal co-operation to address the issue of inconsiderate driving and parking in the village. Publicity, and where appropriate gaining the assistance of the police may improve matters. Cllr C Starling volunteered to assist with photographs of the parking problem at the school to demonstrate difficulties that emergency vehicles may have to gain access.
- Parking on Thornton Road was raised by Cllr de Lacey who was liaising with the police and Girton College. A meeting may be required with traffic officers to discuss the parking problems on Thornton Road.
- Cllr Godby reported that there had not been a Neighbourhood Watch meeting recently. This was overdue.
- Cllr Hiley referred to a recent incident where he had had to stop his car because of a language student cycling on the wrong side of the road. The CAE language school should be requested to remind their students about the rules of the road. He also was concerned about bicycle lanes becoming slippery because of leaf fall. This was particularly bad on the Cambridge side of the A14.

Cllr Wilson

Clerk

08/165 Correspondence

1. Notification from SCDC that the District Council could not justify expenditure to retain threatened phone boxes. (*This includes Girton Road's phone box.*) We await BT's response to the objection.
2. Agenda & papers for CPALC's AGM on 6th December 2008 at Bluntisham Village Hall. Bookings for lunch invited.
3. Letter from SCDC advising that plastic bottle recycling banks would be removed from Girton Recreation Ground shortly after 20th November 2008
4. Email from SCDC's Legal Dept on S106 – Wellbrook Way, Girton concerning the transfer of open space to the Parish Council
5. Letter from Cambridgeshire Constabulary introducing the new Neighbourhood Police Sergeant for this area. The offer to attend a Parish Council meeting to discuss any concerns was noted by Councillors.
6. Letter from SCDC on a Housing Shortfall Public Consultation between 31st October and 12th December 2008. Girton is not specifically mentioned but is included under the heading of "Edge of Cambridge".
7. Letter from Department of Communities and Local Government Consultation on revising the Code of Conduct for local authority members. Views are invited by 24 December 2008.
8. Letter from Impington Village College about a presentation to explain a possible change of status of the College to a Foundation School. Noted and raised as a possible item for a presentation at a future Parish Council meeting.
9. Courtesy notification from Trees and Landscape Officer at SCDC that works may

be undertaken on protected trees on Girton College's Rugby Field that are subject to a Tree Preservation Order.

10. Letter to Parish Council from CPRE to alert us to their "*Stop the Drop*" anti litter campaign.
11. Letter from Cambridge Police Shrievally Trust asking for financial support for The Cambridgeshire Bobby Campaign. This is a community partner scheme which consists of two PCs visiting anyone over 65 who has suffered from a burglary.
12. Letter from Cambridgeshire CC on Street Lighting Maintenance. Girton PC is requested to check the attached list of lamps for accuracy and completeness. Street lighting charge for 2009/10 stands at £1097.50.
13. NALC – November 2008 Journal.

08/166 That payments for the period 15th October from 19th November 2008 be approved
Proposed Cllr Clift and seconded by Cllr Wilson. The motion passed with one abstention.

The meeting ended at 9.03pm.