

Graveley Parish Council's Meeting
Tuesday 18th April 2017 at 8pm
Held at Graveley Village Hall

Present: Chair Jack Rigg (JR) Vice Chair Cheryl Norgan (CN). Hilary Napier (HN) Tony Bracey (TB)

Members of the public were also present

Apologies – Financial Officer Steve Firth (SF) and NHDC Cllr Terry Tyler (TT)

Declarations of interest-none

Approval of minutes - The Minutes of the 21st March 2017 were approved and signed.

Matters Arising – None

1. Highways Report

Jack Rigg

a) SBC Plan- Travellers Site - At the Examination Stevenage representatives advised the Inspector that a Traveller, introduced by Stevenage Council, was in discussions with the owners of the site with a view to buying the site for his own family use. Subsequently JR contacted the owner who advised that he is not interested in selling the land. JR has since advised the Programme Officer to the Examination of the owner's comments and the Inspector has now written to Stevenage Council requesting clarification on the subject.

JR to liaise with the Programme Officer re Stevenage Response

b) NHDC Local Plan – The full NHDC at a meeting held on the 11th April 2017, approved the submission of the Local Plan to the Secretary of State. The latter will take place towards the end of May and therefore it is still possible for members of the public to comment until then. JR has drawn up a discussion document, sent to all GPC members for their comments on what steps going forward GPC should take in opposing the plan (attached to these minutes) to be discussed at a later meeting.

All

2. Planning Report

Tony Bracey

a) 1a High Street- On the MIS for 7th April 2017 the following item appeared *Ravenscourt Investments Limited Certificate of Lawful Development : Continued existing use as B8 (storage and distribution)*. TB to investigate further.

TB

3. Financial Report

Steve Firth

a) Bank Account- No details on the Current Account and Deposit Account were available as SF was unable to attend this meeting. The current financial situation will appear on next month's minutes.

SF

4. Playground

Cheryl Norgan

a) Playground Report- all is in order, CPM report indicated some minor maintenance required, which was discussed. Alan Eaton will look at the cost and repair / replacement of some bungs.
CN

5. Correspondence Received

a) Local resident's letter re planting High St/Church Lane JR felt that no action should be taken on this correspondence as all the issues raised have been dealt with and minuted many times over in the last months. All minutes from January 2014 up to the present will be available on the Graveley Website.

b) Local residents concern re access by Fire Engine's Grinders End *"On Monday a fire engine was in Grinders End. It had difficulty passing the parked car which is often parked there the person is to do with the school.*

.... How would a fire engine manage past a rather large car. Also how would it manage on morning school start and afternoon pick up it wouldn't at all. Which is what ive been trying to get across for ages. Therefore not being able to access this road until maybe it was too late. This inconsiderate parking is putting a life at risk. It needs to be double yellowed as does outside my house.

Clerk to contact the local Fire Station to ask for their views; it was pointed out that the weekly dust cart collections have no problem in accessing Grinders End.

JT

6. Matters Arising

a) Street Lights- two faulty street lights-Turf Lane and on the footpath leading up to Ashwell Close-both have been reported as they are both in dark areas Clerk to chase up if not fixed,

JT

b) Overgrown Footpath- the footpath between the two public houses leading from Pondsides to the High Street is, once again, very overgrown. Clerk to contact Trevor Ward to get it trimmed back.

JT

c) Dead Tree-a local resident pointed out that a dead tree on the corner of Ashwell Close/Common needs removing. Clerk to contact Hertfordshire Homes to arrange the removal.

JT

d) Dog Mess Bin- Clerk to ask Jim Devereux to give a quote for repairing the bin at Grinders End which has been hit and needs straightening up.

JT

7. Any Other Business

a) NHDC Local Plan – CN gave a report on a Housing White Paper (HWP) a response is available on their website planningpolicyconsultation@communities.gsi.gov.uk and urged all member to have look at it and act if they thought it was of value.

All

b) Grant Applications- Clerk reminded all GPC members that grant applications procedures should be adhered too and that the procedure guidelines will be put on the Graveley website.

JT

c) Phone box update. This was discussed and CN will report back as to the viability of this project at the next meeting.

CN

d) Wall High Street JR emailed *Derek Jerrard District Service Agent* *Before your recent secondment we raised the issue of the disrepair of the above wall and it was my understanding that the job had been put out to tender but would not be undertaken until financial year 2016-2017 for reasons of budget. Please could you let me know where we are on this please as I need to update the Parish Council. And received a reply You are correct this was to be funded in 16/17 but unfortunately higher priority works took precedence. I will resurrect the works order and see if the works can be funded this financial year. I cannot make any promises as this type of work is a low priority and other works may take precedence this year.*

e) Thanks-a member of the public wished it to be recorded in these minutes to acknowledge all the hard work that JR has carried out in opposition to the NHDC/SBC local plan on behalf of all the residents of Graveley, all present agreed

8. Cheques Issued

- a) JR Petty Cash £39.71
- b) Tobias Davey Fees for attending the SBC meeting re Travellers Site £2,500.00 +vat
- c)NHDC Emptying 3 Dog Bins one year £296.40 +vat
- d) HAPTC subscription one year £214.63
- e) Graveley Village Hall grant £500.00
- f) Clerks petty cash £81.00

The meeting closed at 9.52 pm
The next GPC meeting will be at Graveley Village Hall
On Tuesday 16th May 2017

Main Issues arising from the Local Plan for Graveley.

1. Coalescence of Graveley with Stevenage.
2. Green Belt categorisation of the Graveley and surrounding land.
3. Justification and rationale of the proposed settlement area within Graveley which stops at the G&D pub rather than at the village boundary.
4. Policies CBG2/HS2/HS3, which in my opinion seeks to exclude policy checks and balances to ensure “New development well integrated into settlements: respect local distinctiveness” and HS3 8.21 regarding lower housing density on the periphery to mark the transition to the rural area beyond.”
5. Traffic Congestion: NHDC/HH strategy would seem to be to place an emphasis on encouraging sustainable modes of transport and reducing the need to travel (bikes, buses and home working?). It is unlikely this strategy will reduce congestion or increased travel through Graveley anytime soon. This strategy seeks to divert attention away from the underlying issue of congestion.

6. Impact of NS1 on Graveley resident's quality of life (access to countryside: traffic congestion: loss of village identity).

Professional Support to Address the above issues.

Graveley has limited financial resources with which to seek to respond to the above issues. The question is how best to do this, the Inspector will base his or her decision on the legal arguments backed by solid evidence. Where do we invest our monies? In a good QC, Town Planner and/or Traffic Consultant to develop these arguments/solid evidence. We need to priorities the above issues in order to determine the type of professional help we should be seeking, tempered by the funds we have available or are able to generate. Presentation of our case/evidence is almost if not more important than the underlying information.

Village Support.

What support for fighting the Local Plan can we generate internally within the village?

How do we go about it? How tangible is this support in practice?

NHDC during the Examination process will potentially generate reams of new documents either involving amendments to existing documents or new documents in response to the inspector's questions. These documents will need to be read and any new issues identified and raised and responses worked out (if possible) before the examination day on which it is to be discussed.

Will villagers attend the examination on the day NS1 and issues relating to Graveley are discussed at the examination?

Above I have tried to identify issues which I believe we need to address in determining how we proceed in fighting the Local Plan. This needs to be addressed now rather than once the timing of the examination has been announced.