

GAMLINGAY PARISH COUNCIL

ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

held at
The Eco Hub, Stocks Lane, Gamlingay
On Tuesday, 24th April, 2018 at 7.30 p.m.

Minutes

In attendance- J McGeady (Chair Gamlingay Parish Council), Mr M Brettle (GCT Ltd) , Ms E Markwick (Greensand Country- delayed), County and District Councillor S Kindersley, District Councillor B Smith , L Bacon and K Rayner (Clerks) and 27 members of the public.

1. Parish Council Chair J McGeady welcomed attendees. Minutes of the last Annual Parish Meeting held on 25th April 2017 were available.
2. **Chairman's Report (appendix 1)** 3 members of the public arrived at the meeting.
3. **Audited Accounts of the Parish Council** for year ending 31st March, 2017 were made available. Any queries, please speak to RFO Leanne Bacon after the meeting.
4. To receive reports from County Councillor Mr. S. Kindersley and District Cllr. Mrs. B Smith. Cllr Smith summarized work on village surveys –Little Heath are now forming a residents association, mainly to deal with the issues of the unadopted access road. Surveys also carried out at The Cinques –feedback to the Neighbourhood Plan group –main issues are to preserve the ‘seperateness’ of the hamlets. Speed of traffic is the main concern- potential solutions are speed reduction or speed management options. Dennis Green/park Lane area alsobeen surveyed-further responses about seperateness/satellite characteristics. Robinson Court redevelopment-housing now for sale/shared equity-rental- residents from Gamlingay /strong local connection get priority for rental units. 1 member of the public arrived at the meeting. South Cambs District Council still have no Local Plan adopted-now over 4 years in inspection period, and no 5 year housing supply. Speculative development has been permitted and is occurring throughout the district- many large scale developments have been granted permission outside village boundaries. 29 units at West Rd was granted permission last year. Performance of the Planning Service is under review by Central Government- due to low level of performance. Northstowe New Town is not delivering as many units per annum than was predicted- 500 rather than 820 approved. Council is reviewing their scheme of delegation- as referrals to Planning Committee are no longer possible by Parish Councils under the current system. District Council elections on 3rd May- boundary review means that Gamlingay will only be served by one Councillor 2018-2022- numbers reducing from 57 to 45. Thanks to clerks and

Councillors from all parishes represented, pleasure working with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Council.

Cllr Kindersley first represented Gamlingay in 1999- is with some sadness addresses the meeting for the last time as District Councillor. However, he will continue as representative County Councillor for a further three years, being re-elected in 2017. Most of the time in the last 6-8 months has been about potholes. Highways at the County Council are responsible for these. SK is meeting with Biggleswade resident about permanent fixing method tomorrow, looking forward to hear more. Represents lots of parishes, but aware of how special Gamlingay is. Mixed year- cuts to budgets and closure of the Children's Centre at Bassingbourn. Also working with Highways England on defining the route of the new A428 dualling- the two southern routes will have direct impact on Gamlingay parish. Also working with the Mordens with regard to the east/West rail link – concerns about this and is campaigning for the route to go alongside the A428 route which is a massive housing growth corridor. Changes being made to the local education provision has been a fraught process, now £3.8m rebuild is taking place on the GVC site. There are opportunities for the first school site premises to be retained in public ownership and utilized for a preschool setting on the site. 1 member of the public left the meeting. Currently the village suffers from a lack of preschool places. This proposal is now moving forward and will happen. SK reports in the monthly column of the Gazette-thanks to Mrs Newman. Thanks to the Parish Council for posting information on its Facebook page-use at own risk, but generally purpose is a force for good. Final comments relate to overspend by £13m on Ely southern bypass, and concerns about shared services agreement with Northamptonshire/Cambridgeshire, particularly legal services- which will have some consequences for Cambridgeshire. Thanks to the Parish Council and chair and clerks- always provide stuff to do. Thanks to residents- always a joy and privilege to serve people of Gamlingay. Thank you for the opportunity to do this since 1999, it has been a fantastic journey.

5. Presentations :-

- a) Mr M Brettle- Gamlingay Community Turbine Ltd
Introduced the Community Turbine and summarised the monies made available for community projects since 2014 through the profit share system. The money made available as a tithe for community groups from Gamlingay Parish to apply for. Applicants preferred not to be individuals, to benefit groups/more than one person/family, and preferably have a positive environmental impact.
2014-15- £6,208, 2015-16-£7,281, 2016-17-£7,830, 2017-18 £4,706.
Some additional expenditure on maintenance was required in 2017, which impacted on available funds. Lots of groups have benefitted from grants to date a total £26k has been distributed to the community.
Mr M Brettle thanked for his presentation.

- b) Ms E Markwick- Greensand Country- is part of Bedfordshire Rural Communities Charity, under the Greensand Trust. The Greensand Country has secured £1.6m from Heritage Lottery, and a further £1.4m match funding. There are 20 partner organisations, and the project area

stretches along the spine of hills and heathland running from Leighton Buzzard to Gamlingay. One project is to design a gateway feature here at the Eco Hub. Base geology is sandstone and the marketing logo of Greensand heart demonstrates the bedrock and associated colours of heathland and acidic grassland and woodland of the area. Over 40 projects are ongoing, working woodlands, improving access, grants, festival, heritage skills. Working with Shuttleworth College to develop conservation skills for young people projects for the natural and built environment and developing heritage skills. The purpose is to develop a destination brand- to encourage visitors to stay rather than pass by the area-developing a sense of place and coherence. County festival 26th may to 3rd June-booklet contains 50 activities and will run every year for the next 3 years. The Grant schemes- three themes- **Community Heritage**-£500 to £15,000 increases the understanding of local heritage- i.e a geophysical survey of Warden Abbey has been funded –illustration of what it would have looked like has been produced. **Living Heaths/working woodlands**- landscape at risk so grant funding available to bring habitat back into positive management. **Improve and repair sandstone structures**- Many exist in the area and need maintenance to ensure they survive- grants are available for these. Further information on grants can be provided please contact us. Mrs Poulton is to do further presentation in June/July to Parish Council on wider projects.

6. **Questions from the Public** -No questions.
7. To transact such other business as may be incidental to the Meeting- None.

Meeting closed 8.20pm- Attendees invited to stay for refreshments.

Signed.....Dated.....

Appendix 1 GAMLINGAY PARISH COUNCIL CHAIRMAN'S REPORT 2017 - 2018

Hello everyone and welcome to our Annual Parish Meeting. My name is Jackie McGeady and it has been my pleasure and privilege to serve Gamlingay as Chair of the Parish Council for the past 3 years and prior to that as vice chair for 3 years under the exceptional chairmanship of Sarah Groom.

This is my final report as Chair of the Parish Council and I should like to thank everyone who has supported me throughout the last three years. It has been a pleasure to work

with such an eclectic team of Councillors, two very efficient parish clerks and of course our current District Councillor Bridget Smith and County Councillor Sebastian Kindersley.

I would also like to welcome tonight Mike Brettle from the Gamlingay Turbine Committee and also Eloise Markwick from the Greensand Country Landscape Partnership who will be speaking to us later about the Grants that are available to residents of Gamlingay and also the Parish Council.

The Council has had yet another busy year and before I go any further I should like to give you some facts and figures. We have had:

- 11 Full Council Meetings
- 28 Planning Meetings
- 10 Finance Meetings
- 3 General Update Meetings with the Hub Trustees
- 2 Staffing Meetings
- 12 Neighbourhood Plan Meetings
- 2 Methodist Chapel Meetings
- 1 S106 Group Meetings

We currently have 15 Councillors representing a wide cross section of skills. In 2017/18 we said goodbye to Grace Brass and Charlotte Sale and welcomed Sam Martin, Keith Warburton, Ann Kirby and Steve Hemmings.

Each year in February and October we encourage local groups and charities to apply for grants and during 2017/18 we have donated almost £8000 to village and local organisations including:

Forward Gamlingay
Wildlife Trust
Gamlingay Day Centre
Autism Bedfordshire
Avenalls Way OAP Group
Gardening Club
Magpas
Blythe Way Bingo Club
Blythe Way Tuesday Club
WI
British Legion
First Gamlingay
Firefighters Fund
Gamlingay Schools Out Club
Gamlingay and Gransden Scouts

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS EVENT

The Christmas lights event in Church Street on Saturday December 2nd 2017 was again a great success. A big thank you to everyone concerned and special thanks must go to our clerk Leanne, Shelley former Eco Hub manager, Janette, Sandra and Kate Laugharne for co-ordinating everything, providing materials and coming up with great ideas.

WI HALL

This year our main focus has been on co-ordinating the sale by auction of the WI Hall. On the 14th March the hall was sold for £192,000 (guide price £150,000 to £175,000) and the proceeds will go towards paying back some of the Public Works loan which was taken out to enable the building of the Hub.

PLANNING

Planning Application workload has been heavy during the past year but our Planning Sub Committee has always risen to the challenge. We have been concerned not to lose the unique character of Gamlingay and its satellite settlements including the Cinques, the Heath and Dennis Green and as part of the neighbourhood plan work, supported surveys to ascertain what residents value and what they think could be improved.

GREENSAND COUNTRY PROJECT

We are excited to be working with the Greensand Country project and to have succeeded in moving the start of the Greensand Ridge Walk from its dangerous location at the Cinques to the Eco Hub. We are now seeking funding to install a gateway feature.

THE POST OFFICE

Two years ago, the Post Office, during a general nationwide review, planned to reduce the service at our Post Office in Cinques Road to a single and very limited counter or even close the branch completely. After much negotiation the Head Office was persuaded to not only leave the Post Office as it was, but upgrade it to "Local Plus" level offering all services as before but with a refit and much improved sales and service areas.

CHURCH STREET

The funding for the Church Street Parking project has not yet been released. Leanne has asked County Councillor Sebastian Kindersley to intervene to move things forward. County has requested a meeting to discuss the scheme so hopefully this project can be completed during the coming months.

OFF ROAD BIKE TRACK

During the year three young adults Liam Wright and his two friends Danny and Andrew came to a Parish Council meeting with a plan to refurbish the off road bike track which was now not fit for purpose. With the help of Hutchinsons who gave of their time and expertise free of charge the bike track has now been refurbished. The boys recently came second in the South Cambs Youth Initiative Award. So well done to Liam, Danny and Andrew. They are a credit to the village.

FORWARD GAMLINGAY

The village charity Forward Gamlingay continues to flourish thanks to a team of very committed people. Their focus is very much on teenagers and young people, and over the years they have raised money and built the current Skate Park, re landscaped the Bike Track at the end of the recreation ground for use by off road bikers, started a record label for young musicians and mentored young local bands, and when the County Council pulled out of delivering a weekly youth club, they took it on, training their own youth workers and building it into the very successful weekly club it is today. It's not **just** about the youngsters though. They are currently creating a Gamlingay Business Hub, with the aim of bringing local businesses together with regular meetings, offering support, information and training, and helping to keep Gamlingay a vibrant place of work. Just recently they ran an art course at the Hub in conjunction with the Art Barn for older people which has produced a fantastic clay frieze of a section of Church Street complete with cars and people. It is now available for everyone to view in the Eco Hub. The Parish Council continues to support the projects of Forward Gamlingay and this year we have contributed £6000 towards their initiatives.

The Parish Council is also working in partnership with Forward Gamlingay to develop a unique and very exciting local business support app. We look forward to its launch in early summer.

LIBRARY

The Library is still a vital part of the Gamlingay community. Thanks to Kate Laugharne and all her volunteers this great facility brought in over 4500 visitors in 2017/18.

DISTRICT AND COUNTY COUNCILLORS

A big thank you must go to our current District Councillor Bridget Smith and County Councillor Sebastian Kindersley. They have kept the Parish Council fully informed about what is happening outside the village and are an invaluable asset connecting us with Cambridgeshire District Council and Cambridgeshire County Council should we have a problem or need to secure the right information and help on any issue.

DUTIES CARRIED OUT BY THE PARISH COUNCIL

This has been another busy year for the Council and here are some of the duties they carry out throughout the year which are crucial to the smooth running and attractive appearance of the village:

- Cutting the grass in all public areas
- Checking and managing tree safety
- Checking and maintaining our beautiful Millbridge Brook Meadows
- Checking and maintaining the Cinques
- Keeping the cemeteries tidy and well cared for
- Checking safety and maintaining the play equipment at the Butts
- Nagging highways to repair potholes and pavements
- Litter picking
- Clearing rubbish
- Caring for and maintaining the Old Methodist Chapel

Keith Woolcott our handyman makes sure that all the above tasks are undertaken professionally and I should like to thank him personally for all his hard work and support to the Council. Keith is a fantastic asset to the Council and the community.

Thank you to Leanne and Kirstin our two Parish Council clerks. We are so fortunate to have two people who are so professional and efficient. They have been a great asset to me in my final year as Chair.

Finally, my team of Councillors. Thank you for your continued help and support this year. A special thank you must go to my Vice Chair Sarah Groom. Sarah has been a Parish Councillor for over 10 years (three years as Chair) and two years ago she was awarded Parish Councillor of the Year by South Cambs District Council. Unfortunately she is leaving us this year but I know that she will never be far away to offer the Council help and advice should they require it. She has been a never ending support to me and other Councillors and I wish her every success in the future.

Jackie McGeady
Chair Gamlingay Parish Council

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