

Guilden Sutton Parish Council
Draft Minutes of the Ordinary Parish Council meeting held on Monday 2nd
September 2020 at 7:30pm via Zoom

PART 1

Chairman: Cllr D Hughes (DH)

Present: Cllr P Paterson (TP), Cllr I Brown (IB), Cllr S Proctor (SP), Cllr M Littlewood (ML), Cllr S Ringstead (SR), Cllr W Moulton (WM) and Cllr D Broughton (DB).

Clerk: Louise Gibson (LG).

In attendance:, Cllr M Parker (left 8:30pm). 3 members of the public.

1 Procedural matters.

(a) Apologies.

Apologies received from Cllr G Heatley (Holiday)

Apologies received from the clerk, Lisa Tiplady (LG) due to illness

(b) Declarations of interest. DH and ML declared an interest as members of the Guilden Sutton Green Space (GSGS) Group.

(c) Confirmation of the minutes of the Ordinary Parish meeting of the Council held on Wednesday 15th July 2020. It was proposed by TP and seconded by SP and agreed that the minutes of the Ordinary meeting of the Council held on 15th July 2020 should be approved. The minutes will be signed as soon as possible by the Chair as a true record of the meeting.

(d) Dates of future meetings.

2020

7th October

4th November

2nd December

All meetings will be in the Village Hall at 7.30pm unless Zoom meetings are required due to social distancing regulations.

2. Coronavirus

Nothing to report

3. Community engagement/Communications:

(a) Visiting officers.

Mr Lewin thanked Public Right of Way officers for the clearing and cleaning behind Oaklands.

ACTION: LT to send letter of thanks to Mr Richard Ankers, CWaC PROW officer.

(b) Visiting Members. No matters raised

(c) Public speaking time.

Sarah Jessop of the GSGS group presented a Climate Emergency Purchase Proposal to Cllrs. Please see Appendix B

Ms Jessop explained that the proposal may seem different from the original model, resolved to be accepted by council but this model could still be retained in the new financial year if they were not successful in their bid for the Climate Emergency fund. The benefit to the Parish Council would be that, if the bid was successful to the Climate Fund, this would draw £35K 'new' money into the project, and so reduce the sum needed from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLB).

The intention was still that that the GSGS purchase the land and then transfer ownership to the Parish Council at a later date.

Ms Jessop reminded Cllrs that applying for money from the current round of the Climate Emergency funding need to be fully developed, with all necessary agreements in place and therefore asked Council to consider endorsing this revised approach to purchasing the land off School Lane, and to confirm that a grant of £10K would be made from S106 funding as soon as the rear-field purchase is complete.

(d) Public correspondence.

- Building rubble fly tipped at end of bridal way on Station Lane. This has been reported. Reference: SS230915274
- Possible people camping on the field next to the Bridle Way.
ACTION: LT to visit area to review
- Advice has been sought from CWaC enforcement after several concerns raised regarding land at corner of Guilden Sutton Lane by the bridge over the Railway.
- An enquiry was made regarding the pavement outside Ivy Cottage on School Lane. Clerk has contacted the resident and referred to CWaC officer for any historic issues.
- Anti-social behaviour reported on sports field and request for additional signage. Clerk confirms that PCSO is aware.
- Sign post opposite Belle vue Lane on school lane has been damaged. Clerk reported to CWaC on 20/7/20. Reference: HW229916516
- Overhanging Oak tree branch over School Lane / Guilden Sutton Lane. Clerk reported to CWaC on 23/8/20

SR and TP had held a Surgery on Sat 29th August. Issues raised included:

- Pipers Ash – A resident suggested that the benches needed painting but Cllrs confirmed that this has been completed in the summer
- The hedge by the old school was in need of cutting but Cllrs had visited and seen no encroachment
- The weeds had sprayed in some areas.
- Following a Facebook Pleas, bags of grit has been moved, with grateful thanks to resident Joe Pedder who did this.
- The border by the Post Office has been tidied up by Roy.

ACTION: LT to post a public thanks on Facebook for the above.

ACTION: The next surgery will be held on Saturday 3rd October with DH and ML.

(e) Website.

It was confirmed that the website was kept up to date. Cllrs were welcome to contribute with suggestions or comments.

(f) Communications sub-committee

The Communications Strategy document has been circulated to all Cllrs. It was noted that website access details, Facebook, Email addresses and What's App details should be included. It was also recognised that there must be a multi-approach to ensure all demographics were reached such as magazine, noticeboards.

Resolved: It was proposed by SP and seconded by TP that the Strategy document was accepted.

4. Guilden Sutton Green Space

(a) Solicitors.

It was noted that the Prescriptive Easement has been considerably delayed due to errors made by a third party.

It was noted that the Climate Emergency Climate Fund had a closing date of 30th September but had been worded to state 'or when yearly allocation has been been committed'. It was confirmed by Ms Jessop, who had sought clarification from CWaC that all applications by the 30th September would be accepted for consideration but if available funds had not all been allocated by 30th September, applications could be considered after that date.

The question was asked about whether the Parish Council could apply for funds too. However, Ms Jessop stated that the GSGS group has charitable status and therefore timeframes constraints were not as limiting and may be considered more favourable to them to apply.

It was suggested that Mersey Forest needed the sale to be completed by Christmas, with the funding grant needing to be completed by end of the financial year but were being very understanding about the current situation. It was confirmed that all trees could be planted on the back field if no access from the front field. This would be 5000 trees so less than originally planned. The vendors had given permission to plant trees.

Access would be negotiated as part of the purchase and would be a condition of purchase. Ms Jessop confirmed that the basic principles had been established.

If the Prescriptive Easement application wasn't successful, Ms Jessop suggested that the Green Space could still be accessed which would still meet the aims of the group and therefore still have value to residents.

If the Climate Emergency funding bid was not successful, the initial intentions could still be considered. The decision from the Climate Emergency fund was expected to be a tentative reply by mid-October and a confirmation of decision by the end of October 2020.

Ms Jessop confirmed that if the Parish Council were to grant the £10,000, this would fund the following

- Tree Assessment
- Publicity of Intention
- Tree Protection (this could be variable cost due to less trees now)
- Initial Play provision
- Signage
- Fencing to enclose the pond area

It was noted that this grant would be an appropriate use of S106 money for the value it could provide for residents.

Questions were raised regarding how the £10,000 could be shown and accounted for, in order to provide transparency for residents and for audit purposes.

ACTION: LT to discuss with GSGS about whether it would be possible for invoices to go directly to the Parish Council, with a cap of £10,000.

RESOLVED: It was proposed by DH, seconded by WM and voted for that the Parish Council award up to a maximum of £10,000, taken from S106 money and agree the revised approach of buying the rear field first.

Please note: The following discussion took place later in the meeting after noting that this was missed in the original discussion in Item 4, Part 1.

In order to process the extension request for PWLB, they required information including confirmation that original council officials, who were present at the resolution to borrow are all in post. This was not the case as one Councillor had left and DB had joined.

RESOLVED: It was proposed by SP, seconded by WM and voted for that the Parish Council request an extension to the PWLB

5. Environment

(a) StreetCare. Nothing to report.

(i) Bins/Litter

A list of litter and dog bins has been circulated.

ACTION: LT to add dog bin on Green Lane before the A41

Signage, considered offensive to some, have been removed. It was questioned whether the PC should obtain a quote for professional 'No Littering' signs.

ACTION: All Cllrs to monitor litter now that weather is changing and schools returned

(ii) Benches

All benches now been painted

(b) Dog Fouling. Nothing to report.

(c) Trees and Hedges, planters and bulbs.

A question was raised regarding the Parish Car Park hedge and whether this should be getting cut. It was suggested that the cut was imminent.

ACTION: All Cllrs to monitor and report back at next meeting if not been cut

6. Planning.

(a) New/recent applications.

New planning Application

20/02900/TP O	Firdale 1 School Lane Guilden Sutton Chester CH3 7ET Fell 3x ash trees Comments by 8th September 2020
20/02662/FUL	109 Oaklands Guilden Sutton Chester Cheshire CH3 7HG Replace flat roof and canopy to side and front of dwelling with tiled pitched roof and canopy. Comments by 10th September
20/02621/FUL	Heathfield Guilden Sutton Lane Guilden Sutton Chester Cheshire CH3 7EX Increase for up to 20 touring caravans and camper vans Comments by 11th September

ACTION: IB and DH to visit Firdale

ACTION: TP AND DH to visit 109 Oaklands

ACTION: TP AND ML to visit Heathfield.

SP asked for consideration to be given to how many toilets would be provided, whether the pitches were to be hardstanding as caravans may get waterlogged in poor weather and also access as concerns may be raised if it was not specified that all caravans should be turning left when leaving.

Awaiting Decision

20/01531/TP O	Firdale 1 School Lane Guilden Sutton Chester CH3 7ET 1x ash tree - to be felled. The tree is part of a hedgerow running alongside Firdale Comments by 2nd June 2020
20/01785/FUL	Willow Corner Belle Vue Lane Guilden Sutton Chester Cheshire CH3 7EJ

	Single storey side and rear extensions. Rendering the property. Comments by 29th June 2020
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Appeal

18/04703/OU T	Land At School Lane, Guilden Sutton, Chester. Outline application with some matters reserved for erection of two dwellings and associated access works. Appeal reference number:20/00041/REF
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(b) Neighbourhood Plan.
Nothing to report.

7. Training/Events/Meetings.

Nothing to report

8. Parish Car Park.

The trees had now been removed.

ACTION: The area where the trees have been removed is to be reviewed in 12 months for consideration of saplings to be planted.

9. Leisure Services.

(a) Playing field. Nothing to report

(b) Play Area.

ML and DB completed a risk assessment and shared with all Councillors. It was decided to reopen the park on the 26th July.

It was noted by ML that the tape had been removed from the talking tubes on three occasions. SP questioned whether a Facebook post should be used to help residents understand the importance. ML suggested that they could also promote this within school.

ACTION: ML to ask school to promote message that Talking tubes not to be used.

RESOLVED: It was proposed by ML, seconded by SP and voted for that the play area should be closed on weekdays and opened at weekends.

Quotes were considered for wetpour repairs. DB suggested that the area was presenting a trip hazard. It was noted that the Annual Inspection was due soon who could determine how much of a risk it presented.

ACTION: LT to check when Annual Inspection due and report back

(c) Footpaths/Footways. Nothing to report

(d) Mobile Library.

The mobile library will be visiting the parish on:
Service currently suspended due to lockdown

10. Public Transport

Possibility of painting bus shelter.

ACTION: Deferred to next meeting.

11. Highways

(a) SID Group. Nothing to report

(b) Standing consideration of Highways matter. Nothing to report.

(c). Hill Top Road/Arrowcroft Road junction. Nothing to report.

12. Finance

(a) Income. Nothing to report

(b) Payments.

Between meetings

Lisa Tiplady (Zoom meeting subscription)	£14.39 (including £2.40 VAT)
Lisa Tiplady Wages	At agreed rate

June

Lisa Tiplady (wages)	At agreed rate
Beesley and Fildes (Grit) 44317114 402908	£100.62 including £16.77 VAT
Mid Cheshire Grounds Maintenance Ltd	£120 x 2
Lisa Tiplady (Zoom meeting subscription)	£14.39 (including £2.40 VAT)
Mid Cheshire Grounds Maintenance Ltd	£264 including £44 VAT
Cheshire West and Cheshire (Contested reelection charge	£546.98
Brian Lewin (Web hosting and domain name for one year)	£80.27 including £13.40 VAT
Came and Company (Insurance)	Waiting on quote

A query was raised regarding the £264 to Mid Cheshire Grounds Maintenance.

ACTION: LT to provide clarification on this payment and DH and TP to approve this payment

It was proposed by Cllr SR and seconded by Cllr SP to accept the financial information (apart from the payment listed above) and approve the payments put forward.

Change in Clerks pay scale - moved to Part 2.

13. CWAC and other organisations

(a) CWAC correspondence. Nothing to report.

(b) ChALC

Chalc have asked for up to date info on councillors.-information provided on 26/8/20

(c) Defibrillators. Nothing to report.

(d) Police and Fire services. Nothing to report.

14. Guilden Sutton Primary School

It was noted that the school currently requires more tables to accommodate social distancing and the Community Association has been happy to help with allowing the school to borrow tables from them. It was also reported that the start of the new academic year went well. The closure of the bottom of Arrowcroft road worked well and allowed the children to cross safely. The PCSO was also in attendance.

15. Community Events. Nothing to report

16. Village Hall Management Committee

The hall was open from the 1st September. A significant amount of time and effort has been given by TP and her colleagues to ensure that the hall is covid-safe.

17. Members information /speaking time.

WM asked the council to consider purchasing additional lamppost poppies to add to the 20 already owned.

RESOLVED: That the Council purchase an additional 20 lamppost poppies. WM to coordinate.

SR sent apologies for the next meeting.

SR noted that Guilden Sutton PC had been included in the Chalc 'best practice' case studies of Council responses to the Covid pandemic, for the skipping ropes donated.

Appendix A

Notes of meeting on 22/8/20 about the sale of land off School Lane Present - Graham and Susan Sandlin, Brian Lewin and Sarah Jessop

1. Proposed sale to Parish Council

a) Prescriptive Easement – due to the delay in applying to the Land Registry, the Prescriptive Easement will not be through within the planned (September) timescale. In order to retain the Mersey Forest funds, the Parish Council would now have to be able to commit to the purchase without the security of knowing that the Prescriptive Easement has come through.

Action: the PC will need to refer to their legal advice so that a decision can be made at their next meeting on 2/9/20 - whether or not to proceed without the Prescriptive Easement SJ/LT

b) If the PC are able to complete the purchase without the Prescriptive Easement being in place the sale can proceed as planned, subject to agreement on the overage clause: Graham and Susan confirmed that they are prepared to go ahead with this on the proviso that a suitable restriction be included in the new property title, to prevent any future sale taking place without the written consent of themselves or their representatives.

Action: Bartletts will need to be instructed to proceed with the sale by means of the overage clause together with an additional restriction GS/SS

2. Contingency Plan

If the PC are not able to proceed GSGS have the possibility of making a purchase, initially of just the rear field, or possibly (subject to funding and the Sandlins' agreement) of the full 6 acres on which the trees are to be planted so that we can maximise funding from the Mersey Forest. This would also be dependent upon an application to the CWAC Climate Emergency fund.

In this case, Graham and Susan suggested that the remaining (un-purchased) land (either the full front field, or just the 2.25 acres at the near end of the front field) could be leased, pending purchase as soon as funds become available.

GSGS would require a permanent right of access through this remaining land in order to access the rear land parcel, together with the option to purchase the remaining land within an agreed timescale. We would also need to know whether Mersey Forest funding could be used to fund trees on land which is not owned by GSGS.

Action: Find out from Mersey Forest project, whether or not funds can be used to plant trees on land which is only leased, not owned. If so, what conditions would be attached? SJ

If we reach this stage, the following matters will then remain to be agreed; how much land will be included in the initial purchase, and how much will remain to be purchased at a later date rental/purchase option for land in front field how to handle access through the front field, to the rear parcel of land

3. Timescale

Whichever option proves successful, the time pressure remains the same. In order to retain the Mersey Forest funding, we need to place an order for trees, and commit to planting this financial year, by mid-September. This doesn't mean that the sale has to be complete, but we need to have sufficient certainty that it will go ahead, in order to sign off the grant with Mersey Forest. We need to have moved sufficiently far forward with the sale that we can be confident that it will be completed before the end of this calendar year.

Appendix B

Guilden Space Green Space

Climate Emergency Fund purchase proposal

1st September 2020

1. This proposal has come about as a result of two recent developments which affect the Green Space project;
 - a. Delay to the Prescriptive Easement application
 - b. Launch of CWAC's Climate Emergency fund
2. The overall Green Space vision (to create a holistic community-managed green space over the whole site off School Lane - 8.34 acres) remains the same, including the land ownership and management arrangements. This proposal sets out the best chance of starting within the current financial year and of retaining the (essential) Mersey Forest funding.
3. The proposal is subject to a successful bid to the Climate Emergency fund: indicative results will be given in mid-October, followed by firm agreements by 30th October 2020.

4. Purchase proposal

- a. GSGS purchase the rear field, at the already agreed price per acre, in order to plant trees by 1st April 2021. The purchase would be subject to a legal agreement with vendor to ensure;
 - permanent access through the front field to the rear field
 - an option to purchase the front field within 12 months, at the current price per acre
- b. GSGS transfer ownership of the rear field to the Parish Council, subject to its retention in perpetuity as a community woodland.
- c. PC could then purchase the front field during the next financial year, once the issues around Prescriptive Easement, overage clause, and PWLB loan have been resolved.

5. Funding for rear field

The cost of purchasing the rear field is £62K. This includes a sum for legal fees to amend and complete the purchase, which would be paid by GSGS.

The £62K would be made up as follows;

Mersey Forest	£20K (agreed with MF)
Climate Emergency fund	£35K (subject to grant application)
Community pledges	£7K (secured)
 TOTAL	 £62K (to cover land costs and fees)

6. Questions

How likely are we to succeed with proposed Climate Emergency bid?

Our initial conversation with CWAC confirmed that GSGS are eligible to apply, that £35K would be a reasonable sum to target and that Climate Emergency funding can be used alongside Mersey Forest funding. The key grant conditions would be that the Climate Emergency funding is used for the purpose for which it is granted – to purchase land and

plant trees, and that it needs to be spent by April '21 ie the same as Mersey Forest grant conditions.

What if the bid is unsuccessful?

There would be no reason why the previous purchase model could not be used by the Parish Council the following year, once the prescriptive easement and overage clause issues are resolved. This would require re-negotiation with Mersey Forest, subject to the availability of funding in the next financial year.

Who else has been consulted?

Relevant aspects of the proposed model have so far been discussed and agreed in principle with CWAC, the Mersey Forest project, and the Sandlin family, respectively.

What if the PC did not purchase the front field within the agreed timescale?

Our vision for a holistic Green Space over the full 8.34 acres remains the same. If for any reason the PC did (or could) not make the purchase, GSGS could step in and seek further grants, or launch a crowd-funding campaign to raise money to purchase the front field.

But, *even if only the rear field was ever purchased*, the village would still have gained the use of 4.7 acres of new public green space. Significantly this is land which would;

- increase the availability of green space to residents of Guilden Sutton
- be securely protected from future development
- be accessible from the existing public footpath network (including vehicular access)
- be a place where current and future generations could enjoy nature and work together to protect it
- be a first step in our communal response to the climate emergency

What about the agreements for set-up costs and maintenance?

Set-up costs: A set-up budget of £10K will be needed as set out in July 2020 (ref PC minutes) over and above the cost of the land purchase. This is for essential tree protection, fencing, safety checks and insurance, initial play provision, and basic signage.

GSGS would ask that this sum be carried over from the agreement made in July, in the form of a grant from the Parish Council to GSGS, on completion of the land purchase.

S106 money totalling £24K has already been approved for expenditure on the Green Space project. If £10K was used to improve and add significant public value to the newly acquired rear field, the remaining £14K could then be used in the following year towards the cost of the front field.

Maintenance: the maintenance grant would carry forward from the agreement made in July, with an adjustment to reflect the smaller area involved.

Are there any additional risks to the Parish Council associated with this proposal?

No, there are no additional risks to the Parish Council.

Are there any additional benefits to the village associated with this proposal?

GSGS steering group consider that this proposal now offers the best chance of commencing the project this year and securing the Mersey Forest investment. There are additional benefits including;

- A successful bid to the Climate Fund would draw £35K 'new' money into the project, and so reduce the sum needed from the PWLB
- The initial phase of project would be of a more manageable size to deliver at first. It will act as a starter project, demonstrating what can be achieved and building commitment and enthusiasm for the future purchase of the front field.
- This proposal meets the vendors' preference to split the sale over two financial years

What can the PC do to support this proposal?

Projects applying for money from the current round of the Climate Emergency funding need to be fully developed, with all necessary agreements in place. The best way to support our bid will be for the Parish Council to endorse this revised approach to purchasing the land off School Lane, and to confirm that a grant of £10K would be made from S106 funding as soon as the rear-field purchase is complete.

7. Conclusion

This proposal represents a shift from the model that we have all been working towards over recent months. However, we hope that Councillors will appreciate that this is a pragmatic proposal under the circumstances, with the overall goal of achieving the same end-result over time.

A considerable amount of background work has been carried out in the last two weeks to bring this proposal to fruition. Subject to a successful bid to the Climate Emergency fund, the Mersey Forest project and the vendors are both in agreement with it. We trust that Parish Councillors will feel the same and will add their support as indicated above, so that GSGS can then work on making a well-founded bid to the Climate Emergency fund.

GSGS Steering Group

1/9/20