

SULGRAVE PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 15TH JANUARY 2015
IN SULGRAVE CHURCH HALL AT 7.45PM

Councillors Present

Andrew Waite, Sally Harding, Clare Pollak, Graham Roberts, Christine Coles (Parish Clerk) and four villagers.

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished them all a Happy New Year.

1a. Apologies

Cllr's Powell and Russell

1b. Declaration of Interests

The Chair declared an interest in the planning application at The Limes, 2 Manor Road.

2a. To approve and sign minutes of the meeting of 20th November 2014

The minutes were then agreed and signed. Proposed by Cllr Roberts and seconded by Cllr Pollak.

2b. Matters Arising

Spring Farm Ridge Windfarm

The second public inquiry into the proposed Spring Farm Ridge Windfarm took place in October 2013. Normally, the Inspector who presides at the inquiry is delegated to make the decision but in this case, the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government, Eric Pickles, announced that he would be making the decision for himself. It was announced on 23.12.14 that the Secretary of State had decided to dismiss the appeal by Broadview Energy Limited and refuse planning permission for the turbines. The company has six weeks in which to consider whether to challenge this decision in the High Court. A legal challenge cannot alter this decision. It was a finely balanced judgement and the benefits of renewable energy were not outweighed by local harm.

The Parish Council thanked Mr Colin Wootton for all his work on this. Mr Wootton also expressed all the work carried out by many others including the fundraising which was done.

3. To receive an update on the village lighting project

Cllr Roberts noted that at the last meeting he was asked to look at other aspects of the project. One aspect was whether LED lights would be an advantage both cost wise and for energy consumption. Cllr Roberts contacted SSE who are the preferred supplier. There is an LED equivalent design for a contemporary light and the additional cost would be £2K. Cllr Roberts has looked at the current energy costs which are £1K per year. Brand new fittings which will last 25 years will need less maintenance and use less electricity. They would cost 25% of the current bill, making a saving of £750.00 and paying this back after two years.

The total cost has now increased to £37K with services, installation and a Clerk of Works. To take out a Public Works Loan over 25 years would cost £1800 per year. After year 2, £750.00 which would have been spent on energy costs, could be put towards the loan.

Another aspect raised at the last meeting was whether the village could have a more traditional style lighting system. The Parish Clerk met a representative from DW Windsor Lighting yesterday and they are going to quote for a more traditional light. The costs will be more expensive. This will be discussed at the next meeting.

From the floor Mrs Blayney noted that some people have concerns that LED lighting will be too bright. The Chair replied that the Council would choose the fitting that gives the right amount of lumens. They would give a better colour. The council have a responsibility to visitors as well as residents. A note will be put in the newsletter to advise the council are looking at alternative solutions and to give feedback.

Action: Cllr Roberts to draft a note for the newsletter. The information will be passed to Susie Blayney for it to be passed to the Womens Group.

4. To discuss the New Homes Bonus Grant

The Parish Clerk advised that there is an SNC New Homes Bonus Grant of £3K which can be claimed and suggested it is used for funding towards the lighting project. There is a form to complete by the end of February which will then go before a grants panel who meet in April. It was agreed the Parish Council should apply for it.

Action: The Parish Clerk and Cllr Roberts to get together to complete the form.

5. Councillors Reports

New Notice-board - This is work in progress.

Paving in Little Street - The Chair is waiting for Northants County Council.

Improvements to the Church Hall - This is work in progress.

Repairs to Bus Shelter - The Chair has received two quotes. J P Charles have quoted £1896.00 & VAT to repair the shelter. P R Alcock and Sons have said it is not viable to repair. They are suggesting the old one is dismantled and got rid of and a new one built in larch with a soakaway around the back. The cost would be £4185.00 & VAT. Cllr Pollak reminded the Chair about combining the bus shelter with a new noticeboard which has been discussed previously.

Action: The Chair to circulate the quotes and the item to be put on the February agenda.

6. To discuss the 'Short walks Leaflet'

This leaflet is a cream coloured leaflet originally produced by George Metcalfe and Digby Lewis. It is about 20 years old and out of print now. The design is fine but some details needs amending. Mr Wootton advised that there are three PDF walking leaflets on the website which can be downloaded.

Action: Mrs Blayney to try and find the original file of the walking leaflet to get updated.

7. Quality Parish Scheme - To decide if the Parish Council should apply for Foundation Status under the new scheme to be launched in January 2015

There is a new quality scheme being launched this month. There will be three levels - Foundation, Quality, Quality Gold. All quality councils will have the option to receive foundation status without going through the accreditation process and at no cost. This status will expire at the end of December 2015. This will allow the council to keep continuous accreditation in the scheme, whilst preparing the criteria for the new scheme if they wish to do so.

The Parish Clerk recommended to the council that they apply for Foundation Status and she agreed to attend the briefing at Northants CALC on 2nd February to gain more information. This was accepted by the council.

8. Finance

a) *To approve the following payments:*

£83.32 to EON (street lighting maintenance)

£308.12 to Parish Clerk (hours)

£53.72 to Parish Clerk (mileage)

£210.47 to EON (electricity)

Proposed by Cllr Harding and seconded by Cllr Pollak.

b) *To set the precept for 2015/16*

Councillors looked at the bank balances and discussed the street lighting project which will be the most expensive part of expenditure for the coming year. A public works loan will have to be taken out but money will be saved on maintenance and electricity costs. It was agreed to increase the precept by 1.5%. The precept level for 2015/16 would be set at £11,325.00.

Action: The Parish Clerk to email SNC.

9. Planning

- *S/2014/2298/FUL, New entrance gates and timber and glazed all to infill garage door opening at The Old Farmhouse, Manor Road. No objections raised. Approved by SNC.*
- *S/2014/2272/TCA, Fell conifer tree at Apple Acre, Manor Road. For info only.*
- *S/2014/2438/AGD, Determination as to whether prior approval is required (under Class A of Part 6 of the above Order) for the erection of an agricultural building in respect of the siting, design and external appearance of the building at Stuchbury Lodge, Helmdon Road. For info only.*
- *S/2014/2322/FUL, Part single, part two storey front extension, single storey rear extension and first floor rear extension at The Limes, 2 Manor Road. The Parish Council raised objections.*
- *S/2014/2372/FUL, Demolition of existing barn and erection of two dwellings with car ports and associated works at land to the rear of Bentley Farm Bungalow, Helmdon Road. The Parish Council raised objections.*
- *S/2014/2488/FUL, Demolition of dilapidated single storey extension and replacement single storey extension and internal alterations at Old Sulgrave Stores. Under consideration.*
- *S/2014/2489/LBC, Demolition of single storey extension. Replacement single storey extension. Relocation of rooflight and replace door with window in east elevation. Alterations to internal layout at Old Sulgrave Stores. Under consideration.*

11. Correspondence

From

- SNC, Election Briefing for Parish Clerks
- NCC, Draft budget and Council Plan Consultation
- NCALC, Quality Parish Status
- NCALC, No Capping and Transparency Code with turnover of less than £25K
- Department for Communities and Local Government, Appeal by Broadview Energy Ltd, Spring Farm Ridge wind farm

One item of correspondence was highlighted:

- *NCALC, No Capping and Transparency Code with turnover of less than £25K.* The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has just published its 'Transparency Code for smaller authorities'. The Code requires the publication of certain information in order to give electors the books and information they need to hold local public bodies to account. The code applies to all parish councils with an annual turnover of less than £25K. Turnover is defined as the higher of a council's gross receipts for the year and its gross payments for the year.

The Code is designed to replace the external audit which is currently carried out by BDO. It is published now as recommended practise but will be made mandatory from April 2015. Under the code councils are required to publish information no later than 1st July 2015 so Parish Councils have six months to comply.

12. Open Forum

Janet Smith spoke about the memorial plaque for the new tree on the triangle and showed examples of a resin plaque. The principle of the plaque was agreed to but the councillors would prefer it is set into the ground. It would not be a trip hazard and would require less maintenance.

Susie Blayney asked about an update on the defibrillator. The Chair replied the matter is with Mac but he would be happy to help if needed.

The Vodafone signal was discussed which has been down since Friday 9th January. No timescale has been given for when the repair will be completed.

Action: The Parish Clerk to write to the CEO at Vodafone and copy Cllr A Leadsom.

Mr McDonald asked the Parish Council if they could write to Sulgrave Manor Board about the state of Manor Cottages. Mrs Blayney advised that the Manor are trying to raise money but £250K is needed. Income through the gate has increased which is good news. A previous idea to develop Kiln Farm was met with disapproval from the village but would raise vital funds that are needed. Cllr Roberts said he would support an application to improve Manor Cottages. The Chair suggested that the Manor Board and Parish Council get together to draw up a set of development principles. The Chair said he would be happy to host a design workshop. He is also a Member of the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings who have apprentices and might be interested in attending a workshop.

Action: The Chair to pass these contact details to Mrs Blayney. Mrs Blayney to go back to the Manor Board with the suggestions raised tonight.

Mrs Blayney asked if any progress had been made on renaming the new part of Little Street.

Action: The Parish Clerk to contact the street naming department at SNC.

13. Date and time of next meeting

12th February 2015 at 7.45pm at the Church Hall.

Meeting closed at 9.30pm