

SULGRAVE PARISH COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF A PARISH COUNCIL MEETING  
HELD ON THURSDAY 5<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY 2017  
IN SULGRAVE CHURCH HALL AT 7.30PM

Councillors Present

Troy Daniels, Chris Jackson, Will Priestman, Graham Roberts, David Walker, Christine Coles (Parish Clerk) and four villagers

Cllr Roberts welcomed everyone to the meeting.

**1a. Election of Chairman**

Cllr Roberts proposed, as the longest serving member of the Parish Council, to take on the role as Chairman. He did advise that he would be standing down at the May meeting after serving fifteen years on the Parish Council. All the remaining Councillors voted in favour for Cllr Roberts to be Chairman.

**1b. Signing of Declaration of Acceptance of Office form**

Cllr Roberts signed the form. The Parish Clerk to file.

**2a. Apologies**

None

**2b. Declaration of Interest**

Cllr Walker declared an interest in the agenda item 'To discuss repairs/modifications to the street lighting' as he lives adjacent to street light no 6.

**3a. To approve and sign minutes of the meetings of 12<sup>th</sup> May, 10<sup>th</sup> November and 8<sup>th</sup> December 2016**

The minutes of all these meetings were approved and signed.

**3b. Matters Arising**

*Transfer of Land* - Concerns were raised before Christmas that the legal fees were rising. Lewis Thomas has confirmed that legal costs will remain at £500.00 despite the delays. The costs are unlikely to increase. Additional costs have been incurred by the shop to do with the plans and Land Registry matters. The Transfer documents are still with the solicitors and at the time of the meeting it is unclear what the minor points are and whether they will make a significant difference. The Chair will get another update.

*Church Organ Fund* - A letter of support was sent to Libbie Foster by Andrew Waite (previous Chairman). The Parish Clerk has made enquiries but unfortunately there is no legal power for the Parish Council to give a donation to the fund.

*Asset List* - The Parish Clerk to circulate the current updated asset list.

*Community Spaces Grant* - This grant was received in 2013 and is held in the Community Account. It is to be used to purchase equipment for events.

*Standing Orders* - The Standing Orders are to be re-circulated and approved at the February meeting.

**4. To discuss future use of the adopted pay-phone kiosk**

Cllr Daniels had circulated a paper. In October 2016 BT advised the Parish Council that it was undertaking an exercise to remove telephone boxes with low call volumes. The phone box in Sulgrave has been used once in 12 months. In November 2016 the Parish Council agreed to adopt the kiosk and repurpose it into something else that would benefit the village. A community engagement exercise was undertaken to seek ideas from the village and this concluded on 31st December 2016. 23 community members provided a total of seven suggestions.

The suggestions included a library, housing for defibrillator, open bar, dog shower, community greenhouse, complete removal of kiosk and replace with tables and chairs for shop patrons and a village guide.

As there are difficulties in providing water to the kiosk and it being open to the elements it was agreed the following suggestions could not be considered, open bar, library, community greenhouse, dog shower and tables and chairs for shop patrons. It was agreed that the best use would be dual use for a defibrillator and village guide. The canopy would need a new header if the defibrillator idea goes ahead.

*Action: The Village Society to be contacted to provide capital and ongoing costs to convert and maintain the kiosk into a village guide. Mr Wootton agreed to speak to the History Society about this. The Parish Clerk to contact BT and ask about the electricity supply if the defibrillator is supplied by a local benefactor. The Parish Clerk to ask Mac for dimensions so that a sketched diagram of the kiosk can be prepared and shown to the History Society.*

**5. To discuss repairs/modifications to street lighting**

Cllr Walker had declared an interest earlier and did not take part in the discussion. There are two properties in the village who have asked for shields to reduce the light brightness. No 6 which is adjacent to Hill Farm House, Manor Road and No 11 which is opposite The Thatched House, Manor Road. Some shields have already been put on properties outside Spinners Cottages but the gardens are closer to the lights. There is a request for a double shield on Lantern No 6 and a single Shield on Lantern No 11, these could be supplied and fitted by T Clarke Limited who have quoted £766.00. The view of T Clarke to fit a double shield would give a detrimental light output from the lantern. A photo example of the shield had been circulated.

Cllr Daniels asked if the units can be controlled individually and the lighting level turned down as this may be an acceptable alternative to fitting shields. The lanterns can be controlled individually and are already preset to turn down at midnight.

*Action: The Chairman to ask T Clarke if the two lanterns (6 & 11) can be dimmed permanently and if this can be done.*

On a separate note the lantern outside Anne Dyde's cottage has been reported. The light has a failed driver and a replacement has been ordered. The replacement is expected this month.

*Action: The Chairman to chase.*

**6. To discuss the maintenance of hedgerows and verges**

The Chair noted that Ian Cherry has been busy in the village tiding around the Manor and Little Street. The long hedge has been trimmed at the bottom of Pocket Park. A vote of thanks was given.

*Action: The Parish Clerk to send a letter of thanks.*

**7. To discuss essential work to Pocket Park**

There is essential hedgerow work to be done in Pocket Park. There is no solid boundary along the adjoining field which belongs to Mrs Tattersall. There are horses in this field which can be lively and this is causing concern. The proposal is to cut down 60 yards of the existing hedge to slightly above ground level and use the off-cuts to block the gaps whilst the hedgerow recovers. The Silver birch tree will be removed and burnt. Lower branches will be taken off some of the trees. The work is now urgent as hedge cutting finishes in February. The hedge will look open to begin with. The cost to lay a proper hedge would cost about £1K. Mr Fonge and Mr Osman of Towrise have quoted to do the work. A budget cost of £460.00 has been agreed quoted. Councillors all agreed to set aside £500.00 in the budget for the work to be done. The work to be completed by the end of January. It was agreed to put a note in the next newsletter to address any concerns early.

*Action: The Chair to draft a briefing note for Cllr Daniels who will write a note for the newsletter.*

There is a large tree in the corner which is hazardous and may be dead but the tree roots are on land belonging to Sulgrave Farm.

*Action: The Chairman and Mr Fonge agreed to visit the land-owner, Mr Barlow, and to speak to him personally first.*

## **8. Councillors Reports**

Cllr Walker spoke about the ash tree die back problem which is not as dramatic as first thought but still a concern. The government have committed to planting 50 million trees. Cllr Walker has contacted the Woodland Trust to see if the parish are eligible for a free tree pack which are given out twice a year in March and September. The parish are eligible and there are two conditions, the trees to be accessible for the public and a ceremony carried out to mark the planting. The deadline for March has been missed but the September date can be considered. The trees could be planted on the approach to the village and along the Gated Road. Existing trees are to be replaced with a different type. It is hoped that George Metcalfe can be involved. Although he is no longer the Tree Warden he has a lot of experience and knowledge of trees. All Councillors were in agreement with the idea. On a separate note a damaged tree was reported on Magpie Road.

Cllr Daniels confirmed that once he has seen the asset list he will put together an asset management plan in conjunction with Councillors and the community. He has some experience in this area. The Chairman thanked him for the offer.

A HS2 briefing document has been circulated.

## **9. Finance**

*To agree the precept for 2017/18*

It was agreed to set the precept at £13,500.00 for 2017/18 which is an 8% increase from last year. Precepts will not be capped this year but might be for 2018/19. Estimated spend for 2017/18 is £16,194.00 and this includes two additional PWL payments for the new street lights. This figure is still comparably lower to other villages in the surrounding area.

*Action: The Parish Clerk to notify SNC.*

## **10. Planning**

An update was given on older applications:

- S/2016/3085/FUL, Erection of stable block at The Watermill, Stockwell Lane. No objections.
- S/2016/2785/FUL, remove part of front boundary wall to allow new vehicular access and off road parking in front garden at 13 Spinners Cottages, Magpie Road. The application was withdrawn.

## **11. Correspondence**

The following correspondence had been received and distributed:

- SNC, Community Governance Review
- Northants CALC, No Capping for 2017/18
- NCC, Draft Budget and Council Plan
- SNC, Parish Public Meeting Rooms
- NCC, Urban Highway Grass Mowing Agreement 2017
- CPRE, Northants Countryside Design Code

Several items of correspondence were highlighted:-

- SNC, Community Governance Review. This is the process that the Council can use to make changes to parishes, such as changing the boundary parish between parishes, creating or changing wards, merging or abolishing parishes and changing the number of Parish Councillors. The process takes 12 months to complete and any changes will take effect from the next parish elections scheduled for 2019. Comments are to be in by 20th January. It was agreed not to make any comments.

- NCC, Urban Highway Grass Mowing Agreement 2017. The agreement for 2017/18 has been signed and sent back by the Parish Clerk. An invoice has been submitted to request the grant payment of £418.70 due this financial year. A letter to be sent to NCC Highways to ask if the grant can be increased. The Parish Clerk to check the existing grass mowing contract to see when it will need to be renewed.

**12. Open Forum**

The matter of a crow scarer being used early in the morning on Helmdon Road was reported. Mr Fonge agreed to find out the correct time that one can be used.

It was agreed to put a notice in the next newsletter advising of the imminent vacancy on the Parish Council and the second vacancy that will exist in May when the Chairman stands down.

**13. Matters for consideration at the next meeting**

Northants Countryside Design Code

Update on street lighting

Update on the transfer of land

Use of the telephone kiosk

Work at Pocket Park

Adoption of Standing Orders

Update on AY4 footpath

Councillors to think of their responsibility area so that the list can be updated in May.

**14. Date and time of next meeting**

Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2017 at 7.30pm in the Church Hall.

Meeting closed at 9.00pm