

SULGRAVE PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 2ND MARCH 2017
IN SULGRAVE CHURCH HALL AT 7.30PM

Councillors Present

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

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1a. Apologies

None

1b. Declaration of Interest

Cllr Walker declared an interest in the item of street lighting as lamp no 6 is outside his property.

2. Co-option of new Councillor

Laura North was co-opted onto the Parish Council. She signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office form.

3a. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting of 2nd February 2017

An amendment was made to page 2, item 4, 2nd sentence 'panel' to read 'panels'. The minutes of the meeting were then approved and signed. Proposed by Cllr Walker and seconded by Cllr Priestman.

3b. Matters Arising

AY4 footpath -Following on from the last meeting a response was sent to Sarah Clarke, Footpath Officer at NCC by Cllr Jackson. NCC have replied, Councillors consider the response to be the best practical solution. A lot of hard work has taken place communicating with the owner, tenant farmer and Northants County Council. A vote of thanks was given to Cllr Jackson and Colin Wootton.

Pocket Park - A meeting was held with the Chair, Mr Fonge and Mr Barlow about the large willow tree. The Parish Council got a quote from Mr Barlow's tree surgeon and the cost to remove the overhanging branch is £250.00. The larger branches will be stacked to create a wildlife home. Mr Barlow has agreed to make a contribution of £175.00 towards the work. Councillors are happy with the principle. This item is to be carried over to the April meeting as it is an item of expenditure which requires formal approval.

4. To receive an update on the adopted pay-phone kiosk

A meeting was held on 23rd February with Cllr's Daniels and Jackson, Clive Nicholls, Colin Wootton and Martin Sirot-Smith. Discussions took place about the positioning of the defibrillator and the proposed information guide. Cllr Jackson has measured and produced a CAD drawing. There are outstanding issues to be resolved, such as the cabinet type and cost, signage requirements and installation. Cllr Daniels recommended to Councillors that they endorse both projects. A request will be made to George Metcalfe as Copy right Holder of the leaflets in the form of a letter requesting use of the material in the leaflets. This project will now be led by Cllr Daniels and he is hoping for completion by the Summer.

Action: Cllr Daniels to draft a letter to George Metcalfe. The Parish Clerk to forward the email from BT (adoption of payphone) to Cllr Daniels.

5. To receive an update on the street lighting

The Chair gave an update. The repairs to the lantern in Helmdon Road have been completed. The repair was slow but the lead time in obtaining spares was long.

The Chair spoke about lamp no 6 which is too bright. The dimming times could be reset but this would have to be done in the factory. There would be two visits with no lamp working in between. Or a new LED controller could be purchased and the other one becoming a spare. The cost to change the lantern is £757.00. The cost of the part is about £60.00 and the rest is the installation fees including hire of access equipment. The work has to be done by the contractor otherwise it would invalidate the warranty. With the new LED controller fitting the lamp would give 60% output from dusk to midnight and 30% output from midnight to dawn. The Chair drew attention to the fact that it had always been noted from the beginning that the new lights would be much brighter. If this repair is approved there might be the potential for a number of requests to follow. Is it wise to reduce the lighting level when there are potential tripping hazards in the village?

Cllr Walker was able to give some background to the problem although he had declared an interest and would not be voting. His neighbour's son said last year that the lantern was too bright and intrusive and invasive. One affected property has a raised level and they have bought black out curtains. The lantern in question affects three properties. There is no other location in the village where a light affects three properties.

It was **resolved** by a majority vote that the repair cost would not be approved.

Cllr Walker responded to this by saying that residents had accepted that lights could be dimmed. He asked if the Parish Council were misled by the manufacturers and contractors and could action be taken against them? Everyone had thought the lights could be dimmed but it was not made known that it would be expensive and timely. There was a 10% increase in lumen light which might be causing the problem. The Chair noted the Parish Council had specified the lantern on their best knowledge at the time and he believed that the manufacturer/contractor were not in default as the Parish Council had chosen and agreed the lantern type. This concluded the conversation.

6. To discuss how to engage with Northants County Council about highway matters

Councillors discussed the Gated Road and the cheap repair of it. The Gated Road had been placed on the scheme list for consideration by Highways and the Parish Clerk had asked for more information and a site meeting. Highways have said that the gated road is on an extensive list, along with approximately 50 other roads in South Northants. This list is made up of roads which require some form of structural works. The list is 'fluid' which means it changes quite regularly as roads deteriorate at differing rates, taking into account extreme weather etc. The Area Manager has advised that there is little merit in meeting up at present as no funding has currently been identified for any works.

It was agreed that the best way forward is to complain to County Cllr Ian Morris as NCC are responsible for highway problems. It is hoped he will attend the Annual Parish Meeting in April. Cllr Daniels asked if there was money available from the HS2 fund but that money will only improve haulage routes. The Chair noted that the roads were repaired 15 years ago and they are now in a desperate state of repair again. Other areas of huge concern are potholes and storm drains.

Action: Cllr Walker to arrange to meet Cllr Morris at the Gated Road in the summer months.

7. To receive an update on the transfer of land

The Chair gave an update. This matter is now in the hands of Mr Todd and his solicitor. Some progress has been made as the documents are being prepared for signature. Cllr Walker had a concern that the shop were paying the legal fees for the Parish Council. The shop are the tenant and the Parish Council are the landlord. He asked why was the tenant paying to increase the footprint of the land?

For the benefit of Cllr North, the Chair explained that the parcel of land belonged to Mr Todd and he had agreed to donate the piece of land to the shop to allow the shop to store their bins. The shop came to the Parish Council and asked if the Parish Council would be willing to support and obtain the piece of land. It had been agreed early on that the shop would pay the legal costs.

Cllr Walker asked the Cllr's if they felt comfortable about the tenant paying all of the landlords costs. It was accepted that every tenant has to incur costs. The Chair proposed that this matter is carried forward and discussed at the next meeting in May and the Shop Committee are invited to explain where the uncontrolled costs are coming from and if there is a problem in them paying the legal fees.

8. To agree to adopt Standing Orders

The Standing Orders are being revised and do not represent best practise. It is hoped they can be completed and ready for adoption at the May meeting. Councillors to continue the discussion by email.

9. Councillors Reports

Castle Green - The lopping of the trees will take place this weekend. Mr Fonge and Mr Osman will meet to do the work. The cost will be no more than £50.00.

Cllr Walker spoke about the sub committees for Castle Green and the Allotments and asked if minutes are circulated to the Parish Council. The Castle Green Committee keep minutes and Cllr Priestman is now the representative, replacing Jo Powell. The Allotment Society meet once a year. Each committee provides a report for the Annual Parish Meeting.

Cllr North spoke about her new role and said she would like to address work at Pocket Park. She would like to organise the fathers of the children in the village to check the equipment, trees and fences in the park which would address the issues of there not being a warden. The formal annual play inspection will still take place.

The Chair thanked Mr Fonge for all his work in Pocket Park. Mr Fonge has washed the boards, sorted the hedge and planted the tree. He has also agreed to mow the park every weekend, with the permission of Sulgrave Manor, the sit on mower is to be used. This is an outstanding contribution

There will be a litter pick on 11th March. Cllr Daniels to help the Chair with the arrangements.

New Contact list - The Parish Clerk to issue a new Councillor contact list.

Cllr Walker confirmed he was able to dial 999 from his mobile whilst outside the phone kiosk recently.

10. Finance

The following payments were approved under statutory powers:

£220.00 for work at Pocket Park and purchase of hedge plants

£260.00 to Andrews Garden Services (work at Pocket Park)

£50.00 to Parish Clerk (float)

£30.00 to Parish Clerk (contribution to broadband costs)

Proposed by Cllr Priestman and seconded by Cllr Daniels.

11. Planning

S/2017/0159/FUL, Single storey rear extension, garden shed at rear, 1.8mtr metal railings and gate at front of The Old Wesleyan Chapel, Manor Road. No objections.

S/2017/0223/TCA, Felling and removal of one Horse Chestnut Tree at Sulgrave Manor. For info only.

12. Correspondence

The following correspondence had been received and distributed:

Northants Highways, Parish Satisfaction Survey

Citizens Advice Bureau, Help for the Community

Laura North, Application to become a Parish Councillor

Mr Cousins, Nutcracker Cottage

Northants Highways, Gated Road
HS2, Royal Assent received
HS2, Community Fund Update
Mr Foster, Phone and Broadband system

To

Northants Highways, AY4 Footpath
Northants Highways, Parish Satisfaction Survey

Several items of correspondence were highlighted:

- Mr Cousins, Nutcracker Cottage has advised that he is not able to put his bin in the back yard. The Parish Clerk to ask SNC if there are other smaller alternatives to put rubbish in.
- HS2, Community Fund Update. There are two funds. There is £15M for the Central area and bidding starts next year. Applications can be made by businesses who benefit the public and who may suffer during the construction phase. The only eligible candidate is The Manor. Cllr Walker agreed to speak to the Manor. The Community and Environment Fund is to aid communities who will be disadvantaged. The Parish Council will be eligible to bid and grants can be used for the provision/enhancement of community buildings. Cllr Walker to check if the Church Hall is eligible.
- Mr Foster, Phone and Broadband system. Mr Foster was part of the original group when Broadband came to the village 15 years ago. The village had struggled for many years. There is a new fibre optic facility but residents have to pay extra for this. The current service from BT is appalling and the issue is with Openreach. BT have just announced they are increasing their prices by 6% in April. There are independent alternatives that do not use the BT facility and there is a Government initiative to bring broadband to rural communities. Mr Foster has received a letter from Voneus who are looking to bring high speed broadband to the community. If there is sufficient interest they will carry out a survey on properties. If the survey confirms an interest of 30 houses, they will reaffirm their interest and proceed. A small aerial will be put on the church and the Church will receive ground rent. The aerial radiates wirelessly. Each house would have a small dish measuring 5-6cm in diameter. The operational radius is 10km but they might have to put an additional aerial in place. This will take over the provision from BT and installation costs will apply. It was agreed that details could be put in the next newsletter.

13. Open Forum

Mr Foster spoke about the Gated Road and the serious safety issue for cyclists and pedestrians.

14. Matters for consideration at the next meeting

Tree work
Update on Transfer of Land
Adoption of Standing Orders
Update on phone kiosk for defibrillator and signage boards

15. Date and time of next meeting

Short Parish Council meeting on Thursday 13th April at 7pm followed by Annual Parish Meeting at 7.30pm in the Church Hall. The Chair to circulate the Parish Council report by the end of March.

Meeting closed at 9.15pm