

SULGRAVE PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 11TH JANUARY 2024
IN SULGRAVE CHURCH HALL AT 7.30PM

Councillors Present

Richard Fonge (Chairman), Jen Castle, Neil Higginson, Mike Powell, Will Priestman and Sara Staples

Christine Coles (Parish Clerk) and six villagers

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and wished them Happy New Year. Two residents, Eileen Roberts and Nigel Davies who had recently passed away, were remembered.

24/01. To receive apologies for absence

None.

24/02. To receive Declarations of Interest under the Council's Code of Conduct relating to business on the agenda

There were no interests to declare.

24/03. Guest Speaker, Gigaclear - Broadband rollout in 2024

The meeting was attended by Roisin McGettigan (R Mc) of Gigaclear. Gigaclear were founded in 2010 and their HQ is in Abingdon. They have five regional offices and are the preferred network operator. They look after 100 communities. The government are hoping that by 2025 85% of the country will have ultra fast fibre. Upload and download speeds will be the same. They are hoping to start work in Quarter 1 of 2024 (end of March) but there may be a delay due to weather conditions. It has taken 18 months of planning to get to this stage. They are planning on putting a cabinet on Manor Road on highway land. Cllr Powell asked the dimensions of the cabinet. This will be sent after the meeting. The project will take 3-4 months to complete but utility works take precedent. They are allowed a nine month window to finish. More detail will follow over the coming months via the Parish Clerk.

The Chair thanked Roisin for attending and she left the meeting.

24/04a. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 2nd November 2023

The minutes were approved and signed.

24/04b. To note any matters arising from the minutes not included on this agenda

Oak tree donated by HS2 - The oak tree will be planted soon.

Speeding in Sulgrave – The equipment was installed in October but the data received does not support the creation of a mobile enforcement location.

Work to paths – The work to clear the paths is being done.

24/05. To receive an update from Sulgrave Manor

There is no further news.

24/06. To receive an update on HS2 work

Cllr Staples had emailed Simon Davies before Christmas but not received a response. The Sulgrave Road/Greatworth Road off Banbury Road remains shut. It was meant to re-open in early January. Villagers are encouraged to report concerns to the enquiry line and get a response in 3 weeks but that is not happening. Its felt that the wrong information is being given. A tour of the area will happen when the weather improves. Lots of lorries have been seen the other side of the M40 and the contents are being transported to quarries at Great Tew and Enstone in North Oxfordshire

24/07. To receive an update on outstanding highway issues

The new VAS sign for Magpie Road is still outstanding. Conversations with Highways first began in 2022. The new sign was paid for in March 2023 but there is no pole in place yet. The Parish Council will continue to press Highways.

Water was reported on Manor Road on 3rd November but nothing was done. Cllr Alison Eastwood got involved at the end of November. Kier came out in early December but nothing has happened. The temperatures have dropped now and water has spread across the road. The Chair contacted Kier again and they turned up today. The pipe in the verge near the Manor is broken. The Chair thanked both Cllr A Eastwood and Jill Barrett.

24/08. To receive an update on 'The Chronicles of Sulgrave'

At the recent meeting held it was agreed the survey had not reached the 60% return rate. The electoral role which was used before has limited information and therefore it was agreed it was not worth using. Articles have to be submitted by the end of January. It is hoped the book will be ready for April. Mr Sirot-Smith is pleased with the progress.

24/09. To agree a date for a working party to meet at Pocket Park

It was agreed for a working party to meet on Saturday 17th February in the morning. A note will be put in the next newsletter. Pocket Park was discussed in general. Ian Cherry has fixed the broken gate on the park entrance. He charged for materials only. Thanks was given to him. The Parish Clerk is meeting Wicksteed Leisure on 15th January to look at replacing the swings and adding an additional piece of play equipment. The Chair will cut Pocket Park for one more year.

24/10. Finance

The following payments were approved under statutory powers:

£77.69 to B R Cherry & Sons (work at Pocket Park)
£198.50 to Texprep (newsletter copying)
£230.40 to EON (Street lighting maintenance)
£488.93 to NPower (street lighting)
£708.21 to Parish Clerk (hours)
£19.35 to Parish Clerk (mileage)

To set the precept for 2024/25

The precept was increased by 3% in 2023. The Parish Council are working to budget. The main cost will be to replace some of the Pocket Park play equipment and increasing electricity costs. It was agreed to increase the precept by 5% and set it at £16,581.00.

Action: The Parish Clerk to notify WNC.

24/11. To receive an update on Planning

Three tree applications had been received:

- 2023/7945/TCA, Tree work on land south of the Retreat, Park Lane. Supported by PC.
- 2023/7756/TCA, Tree work at the Old Manse, Little Street. Supported by PC.
- 2023/7349/TCA, Tree work at Fleet Farm, Little Street. Supported by PC.

24/12. To receive Councillors Reports

Christmas was discussed. The float was successful and the evening in the hall received well. Thanks was given to Kim and Jane and Tony. £1500.00 was raised for Katharine House Hospice. The wreaths in the village looked pretty.

Events have been held on Castle Green over the last two years. The Chair suggested another event is held this year in mid Summer and led by the Parish Council. Village organisations will be asked to be part of it. A meeting will be organized with one representative from each organization.

The idea was agreed in principle and a date will be picked.

Action: The Chair to arrange a meeting with village organisations.

Castle Green was discussed. A cheque has been passed to the Parish Council and the account will be closed. The Parish Council will be responsible for Castle Green and its maintenance.

- 24/13. Public participation session (Members of the public are invited to address the council. The session will last for a maximum of fifteen minutes with any individual contribution lasting a maximum of 3 minutes)**

The village history sign currently sited outside the churchyard can be moved to the site of the old phone kiosk.

Action: Mr Sirot-Smith to forward the email.

Graham Roberts will organize a working party to cut back overgrowth on footpath AY3 once the weather improves.

The state of the footpath outside Mr Barlows property was reported. It was put on Fix My Street but is not a pothole.

- 24/14. To consider matters for the next meeting**

Quotes for new play equipment

- 24/15. To note meeting dates for 2024**

1st February, 7th March, 11th April (Annual Parish Meeting), 9th May, 6th June, 4th July, 5th September, 3rd October and 7th November

Meeting closed at 8.25pm.