

SULGRAVE PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 6th FEBRUARY 2025
IN SULGRAVE CHURCH HALL, MAGPIE ROAD AT 7.30PM

Councillors Present

Richard Fonge (Chairman), Neil Higginson, Sarah Parker and Jo Peppiatt

Christine Coles (Parish Clerk) and six villagers

25/19. To receive apologies for absence

Cllr M Powell (personal), Cllr W Priestman (personal) and Colin Wootton (MOP)

25/20. To receive Declarations of Interest under the Council's Code of Conduct relating to business on the agenda

No interests were declared.

25/21. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 6th January 2025

The minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed.

25/23. To discuss the forthcoming election in May 2025

Parish Council Elections will take place on 1st May 2025. Every existing Parish Councillor retires. If an existing Councillor wishes to restand for another four year term they must complete a nomination paper. These have to be submitted to Towcester in person by 4pm on 2nd April 2025.

25/24. To receive an update on the event on 1st March 2025 to welcome the new people

Eighteen invites have been sent out and there is good representation from the village organisations.

25/25. To discuss celebrations for VE Day (8th May 2025)

Work is ongoing. The event will take place in Pocket Park either on the first BH in May (5th May) or 10th May if the weather is awful. Cllr Parker to get a group together. A church service is to be confirmed at a later date. Wappenham Royal British Legion will attend if work allows.

25/26. To discuss dog bin emptying and purchasing a new bin

The bins are overflowing and the regularity of collecting is being questioned. The contractor has said they are emptied on a Thursday or Friday weekly. It was agreed to purchase two larger green dog bins to replace the two smaller bins.

Action: The Parish Clerk to order.

25/27. Highway matters

- *To discuss the grass cutting quotes and agreed a contractor for 2025.* Four quotes have been received. Complete Ground Management Ltd (CGM) remain the most competitive. They have cut the village for the last six years. Cllr Higginson has spoken to them and communication should improve. It was agreed to award the contract to CGM.

- *To discuss the grass verge outside Spinners Cottage*

The grass verge is messy. There are more cars in the village now and some park on the grass. The verge is cut and maintained by the Parish Council. There were discussions a long time ago about making the verge into a layby. There will be more pressure to charge cars in the near future.

Action: The Parish Clerk to contact Helen Howard of WNC to ask for a site meeting. The Chair to send a piece for the newsletter.

Cllr Eastwood arrived at 7.56pm.

25/22. Cllr Alison Eastwood of West Northants Council

Cllr Eastwood noted there will be an election in Northamptonshire in May although some elections have been cancelled in other parts of the country. The balance of Councillors will change. Devolution will happen which has come from central government. In September 2024, North Northamptonshire Council along with Bedford Borough, Central Bedfordshire, Milton Keynes, Luton and West Northamptonshire councils, submitted an expression of interest for creating a non-mayoral combined authority based on the South Midlands geography. Milton Keynes and Luton have said they will not stand with West Northants Council. The unitary in Northamptonshire which was created in 2021 will remain but unitary authorities will be formed elsewhere. Some internal departments at West Northants Council have had a tough time in adjusting but there is a new beginning around the corner.

The Chair asked of the benefit of a unitary. There seems to be the loss of a local voice and there were good contacts with the departments at the previous District Council. This has disappeared. Cllr Eastwood urged everyone to participate and vote. Councillors are working hard for their communities.

25/28. To receive an update on HS2 matters

An online meeting was held last week. Cllr Powell tried to attend but he has to be registered. There are traffic lights on Welsh Lane near the Greatworth Junction. The Radstone Road has been closed. Cllr Eastwood noted that a group of people are trying to get the speed limit reduced on Welsh Lane to 40mph. They require highways and the police to work together.

25/29. Pocket Park matters

- To discuss a quote to replace the swing set. This has been discussed before. Sulgrave Charities have agreed to give a grant of £1500.00. The Parish Clerk is waiting for an updated quote to replace one swing set.

25/30. Finance

The following payments were approved under statutory powers:

- £60.00 to Parish Clerk (broadband contribution)
- £180.00 to Greatfield Plants (Christmas Tree)
- £42.00 to Northants ACRE (membership)
- £750.00 to G Ratley (materials to repair Castle Green wall)

25/31. To receive an update on Planning

No planning applications had been received.

25/32. To receive Councillors Reports

The fence on Castle Green will be replaced in March.

The Chair gave an update on the damaged footbridge. It will be replaced when the weather improves.

25/33. 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)

Gigaclear have been back in the village but its unclear when they will be finished.

Action: The Parish Clerk to contact them.

Mr Sirot-Smith asked if more copies should be printed of the Chronicles of Sulgrave. He will speak to the new people on 1st March and there is some interest from the people in Greatworth.

25/34. To consider matters for the next meeting

Parking and possible layby on Magpie Road

Cost of new swing set for Pocket Park

25/35. To note next meeting date and time
Thursday 6th March 2025 at 7.30pm

Meeting closed at 8.25pm.

DRAFT