

SULGRAVE PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A PARISH COUNCIL MEETING
HELD ON THURSDAY 9th JANUARY 2025
IN SULGRAVE CHURCH HALL, MAGPIE ROAD AT 7.30PM

Councillors Present

Richard Fonge (Chairman), Sarah Parker, Mike Powell and Will Priestman

Christine Coles (Parish Clerk) and six villagers

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

25/01. To receive apologies for absence

Cllr J Peppiatt (personal)

25/02. To receive Declarations of Interest under the Council's Code of Conduct relating to business on the agenda

No interests were declared.

25/03. Co-option of New Councillor

It was proposed by Cllr Priestman and seconded by Cllr Powell that Neil Higginson be co-opted onto the Parish Council. He replaces Sara Staples. He signed the Acceptance of Office form.

25/04. To approve and sign the minutes of the meeting held on 7th November 2024

The minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed.

25/05. To receive an update following the Christmas celebrations

The celebrations went well and the Chair was proud of the achievement. The tree was well received in the new position opposite the shop and thanks was given to George Jenkins for providing the electric for the lights. The wreaths looked lovely and thanks was given to Cllr Peppiatt and the ladies that helped her. The Advent Windows were enjoyed. Thanks was given to those who took part. 100 people attended the carol service with their families and a collection was made for KHH.

25/06. To receive an update on the Chronicles of Sulgrave

The sale of the book has gone so well. 70 copies were printed and one copy is left. It is currently available to buy on Amazon for £24.99. Martin Sirot-Smith (MSS) thanked the PC for supporting the concept and the Parish Clerk for dealing with the administration side. Some typos and amendments have been highlighted and it has been suggested to draw down another set. A nice article about the launch was in the recent newsletter and a poster has been put up in the shop. MSS is a member of the History Society of the Northamptonshire Forum and a member of Banbury History Society. These are two more different avenues for advertising. Thanks was given to MSS for all his work.

25/07. To discuss the forthcoming election in May 2025

The current four year term of office finishes this year. The election will be held on 1st May 2025. At the first meeting in May there will be an election of Chair and Vice-Chair.

25/08. To discuss welcoming new families into the village

Sixteen new families have moved into the village in the last twelve months. It was agreed to invite them to the Church Hall on 1st March with tea and biscuits. All the village organisations (two per organisation) will be invited to attend too. Councillors felt this was a great idea.

Action: Cllr Peppiatt to design an invitation.

25/09. To discuss the charges applicable to the allotment bank account

The allotment group have been struggling financially.

The insurance is £99.00 per year and Lloyds Bank have written to say they will start charging a monthly fee of £5 later this month. There will also be a fee per transaction although this may not apply. They cannot carry on as a separate entity and asked if they could hand back control to the Parish Council. Six plots are currently let and there is £96.46 in the bank account. It was agreed the allotments should be handed back to the Parish Council.

Action: The Parish Clerk to liaise with Jill Barrett.

25/10. Pocket Park matters

- *To discuss preserving the existing play equipment in Pocket Park.* A villager has offered to supply free preservative to paint the play structures and equipment. A working party could do the work and Pocket Park be shut for one day. The work does not need to be done until late April/early May. To be discussed at the March meeting.
- *To discuss the survey results.* 25 responses were received which is a 15% response rate. Most were in support of an upgrade except 2. The park is well utilised on a monthly basis and new equipment should be sustainable. Suggestions for new ideas and equipment included a bike track, monkey bars, climbing wall, more seating, flower beds, bug houses and making it more of a community space. These results will be used when applying to HS2 for funding.

25/11. To discuss celebrating VE Day on 8th May 2025

It was agreed it would be nice to mark the event in some way and 10th May was suggested. Last years event was held on Castle Green with a marquee but that is an added expense. Lots of sponsorship was received which helped with expenses. It was suggested to hold the event at Pocket Park. Bunting can be put up at the park and the soldiers will be put out. Villagers will be encouraged to decorate their houses. Graham Roberts to ask the Royal British Legion if they can attend.

25/12. To discuss the grass mowing contract for 2025

The work carried out by the current grass mowing contractor has been disappointing.

Action: Cllr Higginson to get more grass cutting quotes for 2025/26.

25/13. Finance

To set the precept for 2025/26

A draft budget sheet had been circulated. Estimated spend for 2025/26 is £19.8K and estimated income is £19.7K. Many costs will be increasing this year like grass cutting, insurance, dog bin emptying and the Clerks salary. It was agreed to increase the precept by 3% and set it at £17,078.00.

Action: The Parish Clerk to notify WNC.

The following payments were approved under statutory powers:

- £468.00 to Complete Ground Management Ltd (grass cutting in October)
- £28.35 to Parish Clerk (purchase of 2 x proof of Chronicles of Sulgrave)
- £155.96 to M Powell (Christmas lights)
- £84.00 to EON (repair of light in Little Street)
- £88.30 to Texprep (newsletter printing)
- £7.00 to M Powell (timer for Christmas lights)
- £270.00 to Complete Ground Management Ltd (collection of leaves by Stocks)
- £250.00 to J Mears Consulting (work on Chronicles of Sulgrave)
- £230.40 to EON (annual street light maintenance)
- £171.92 to Pile & Son (service of mower)
- £77.10 to Texprep (newsletter copying)
- £17.19 to Sulgrave Village Shop (refreshments for Christmas event)

25/14. To receive an update on Planning

No planning applications had been received.

25/15. To receive Councillors Reports

The dog bins have been overflowing recently but the number of dogs in the village has increased. It was suggested to install another dog bin or increase the frequency of collections.

Action: The Parish Clerk to speak to Marcus Young Landscapes.

Projector – This belongs to the Parish Council but was given to the Church Hall after the hall refurbishment. The village can use it FOC and a deposit is handed over when it is used by hirers outside the village. The Parish Council would pay for any breakages.

Action: Graham Roberts to check the projector is included in the hire agreement.

Kings Portrait – This is with Andrew Dixon of the PCC who are meeting soon to decide if the portrait can be placed in the Church Hall.

25/16. 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)
No matters were raised.

25/17. To consider matters for the next meeting

Quotes for grass cutting

Dog bin emptying

25/18. To note next meeting date and time

Thursday 6th February 2025 at 7.30pm

Meeting closed at 8.30pm.