

SWALCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING **OF 1st DECEMBER 2015 AT 7.00PM** **IN SWALCLIFFE VILLAGE HALL**

Councillors Present

Jane Morgan, Chair (JM)
Jenny Bell (JB)
Ben Benson (BB)
Lizzie Melvin (LM)
Victoria Taylor (VT)
Christine Coles, Parish Clerk (CC)

Cllr Jane Fitzpatrick from Tadmarton Parish Council and ten villagers

1. Apologies

None

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Taylor declared an interest in a planning application at Wykham, Park Lane.

3. To approve the minutes of the previous council meeting held on 29th September and 20th October 2015

The minutes of both meetings were approved and signed.

4. Open Forum

Mr Cooling reported the weight limit sign on Green Lane which has been knocked down. The Parish Clerk to report to OCC.

Mrs Boycott noted that the recent village survey was very successful and people appreciated the countryside, access and peace. She asked the Parish Council on what basis they would be safeguarding these points and allowing villagers to appreciate the nice qualities. She was referring to noise issues at Swalcliffe Park Equestrian. The Chair replied that if there was an issue, it should be brought to the attention of the Parish Council. If noise restrictions are an issue, these should be directed to CDC. There are noise abatement laws and the police would get involved. Noise would not cause a planning application to be refused and the Parish Council is only allowed to give their view. The ultimate final decision on planning is made by Cherwell District Council.

Mr McLoughlin spoke about the line of dustbins in Bakers Lane which are mostly left out each week and in his opinion look unsightly. Mr McLoughlin to send photos of evidence to Cllr Melvin. This matter has been discussed before by a previous Parish Council. The Parish Clerk to look back in the old minutes.

5. Co-option of one new councillor

Mike Stanley was co-opted onto the Parish Council. He signed the appropriate forms.

6. Cllr Jane Fitzpatrick from Tadmarton Parish Council to talk about the proposal by OCC to devolve powers

Cllr Fitzpatrick spoke about the Oxfordshire Partnership Scheme and the proposal by OCC to devolve powers to Town and Parish Councils. There have been a couple of consultation meetings organised by OCC and a recent local meeting held in Wroxton. All the information is on the OCC website and some information is streamed online. The cuts will be massive and priority levels have changed. Cuts will be made to hedge cutting, drains, new signposts and highway maintenance. There is money available in other areas such as via County Cllr George Reynolds. A suggestion has been made for parishes to cluster together and the advantages will be the local parish taking control and upping the current level of care. If parishes were to cluster together, they could employ either a younger or retired person to work three hours per week in each village. Tadmarton have agreed to accept the devolved powers offered by OCC.

OCC will save money by reducing their manpower and contractors and be able to filter out their savings by offering equipment, free training and advice. A meeting was held in Wroxton Village Hall on 30th November and the Parish Council are awaiting notes from this meeting. Cllr Fitzpatrick suggested that local parishes can start the process by sharing information between each other.

The Chair thanked Jane for attending the meeting and she left at 7.25pm.

Action: It was agreed to invite Tim Shickle of OCC and neighbouring parishes such as Tadmarton and Broughton to a meeting in early January. Cllr Fitzpatrick to forward the Oxfordshire Partnership link for councillors to see.

7. Matters Arising (for information only)

Bird boxes acting as a speed deterrent - A suggestion was made some time ago to put a yellow box on the Main Road. It has to be close enough to the road for drivers to see and think it is a speed camera. It could be placed on the oak tree.

Trough in Park Lane - The matter is in hand with the farmer, Duncan Jack.

Welcome to Swalcliffe Leaflet - This is being covered under the Parish Plan. Various aspects are being looked at by different people, Cathy Stoertz at the history of the village, Michelle Boycott at walks and Cllr Bell's contribution will be about local amenities and services including information about shops and medical services. There will be another meeting in January. It is hoped that the information can be put on the website and Facebook page.

Parking to the side of 1-2 Madmarston View - This item to be carried forward to the next meeting.

Review of Conservation Area – The Parish clerk to contact CDC for an answer to her outstanding letters.

Assets of community value – The Parish Clerk to contact CDC about the form.

Broadband update - The funding part is still undecided and work may not happen until 2017. The Chair to get an update. Some residents have had their own issues with BT recently and complained.

Replacement of rotting signpost in Park Lane – The new signpost has been ordered by OCC and should be in place before Christmas.

Salt bins – The free bag of salt has been delivered to Grange Farm. If neighbouring villages require extra salt, a small charge could be made for delivery.

Cutting of churchyard – The Parish Clerk to draft a written contract for Gerry Melvin.

Speedwatch - Some sessions have been held with a PCSO present. Stamatis Trivizas has agreed to change the batteries in the bottom speed sign. The Parish Clerk to email both Stamatis Trivizas and Dan Parish to thank them. Cllr Taylor has spoken to Wroxton and they have had a strip placed on the road by OCC. This is a survey and measures the average number of cars and speed. The speed vans are sent to spots where the most motorists will be caught such as on the motorway.

Parish Plan – Another meeting has been held. A draft 3-5 year is being drafted and will be put on the website. All clubs and groups have now started their activities and things are moving forward.

8. To receive a presentation on new proposals for the garage area (Mr Foley)

Mr Foley had resigned from the Parish Council last month as there was a conflict of interest with the garage area.

Mr Foley has prepared a new proposal for the Parish Council to consider.

The main points included:

1. Existing garages to remain.
2. An Increase in lease rent.
3. A management group to be formed between the Garage owners and Parish Council that meet every six months.
4. Garage owners to pay a separate service fee with a contribution from the Parish Council.
5. The Management group to have a separate account to the Parish Council.
6. A new five year lease to be prepared by a solicitor which includes a break clause and the right to renew.
7. Sub letting of the garages only available to residents and subject to approval from Parish Council.
8. One garage per household but not to be regarded as part of the house property.
9. A garage user must be a resident of Swalcliffe.
10. The garages must not be used as a place of work or work related activities.
11. The Parish Council could provide a list of residents interested in purchasing a garage. The Parish Council should be allowed to bid for a garage.
12. Annual meeting to take place between the Parish council and garage owners.
13. The Parish Council to review the rent lease by 1st December.
14. In the event of an existing leaseholder moving the new owner of the garage will be offered a new five year lease.
15. If in the event of the death of a leaseholder the lease will be offered to the next of kin providing they still live in the village.
16. The Parish Council might like to consider the sale of the freehold to a garage owner at an agreed market rate.
17. The Parish Council as a mark of good faith to extend the current lease until the end of 2016. This will allow the Parish Council and garage owners to consider all options including a break clause that will allow a new lease to come into effect.

Mr Foley had also listed supplement issues and a breakdown of finance proposals for the lease rent.

From the floor, Mr Hill asked where the proposals had come from? Mr Foley replied that he had put the proposals together and it was shown to all garage owners. The general agreement was to present the proposals and for them to look for a settlement for a new lease with the Parish Council.

Mr McLoughlin, a current garage owner, said there were some good points in the proposals. However he felt the biggest problem was ownership. He had wanted to sell his garage some time ago and Matt Stanton has shown an interest to buy it. This would mean Mr Stanton would have three garages but the proposal from Mr Foley is one garage per household. Mr Stanton has mentioned swapping his double and keeping the two singles ones on the end. Mr Foley and Mr McLoughlin both knew of this idea.

Cllr Stanley noted that the problem is ownership as the Parish Council only owns the land. There is nothing stopping garage owners putting a proposal to the Parish Council to sell their garages if they want to do that. The value is in the lease.

Mrs Irons had bought a garage with her house and wanted to sell another garage that she currently owns in the village. It was suggested that she re-contact potential buyers before the end of the year to ask if they are still interested and to suggest that they contact Councillor Melvin for further information regarding a year's land lease if they are. Information had been provided to a potential house buyer on garages in Swalcliffe, when requested. The Chair noted that the Parish Council had decided at the September council meeting not to renew any leases. Mrs Irons felt that if people wanted to buy a garage for one year only, then that should be allowed. She said it has been very difficult for all garage owners. The Chair replied that the situation has been difficult for the Parish Council too and it will never be easy to resolve for everyone.

Cllr Stanley asked garage owners if there is a will to purchase the freehold if offered to them? This could be for the Parish Council or garage owners to own each garage and base. If this did happen, a right of way would have to be established for the garage owners.

Cllr Melvin noted that the legal part of the process would need to be sorted out first and then there is the clearing of the rubbish. If everyone clubbed together, a skip would cost about £120.00.

Action: Councillors to consider the proposals put forward tonight. Each garage owner to submit their own thoughts about the proposals to the Parish Council. A decision to be made at the January meeting.

9. To receive an update on the Woodland Play Area

Mr Beddowes reported that this project is progressing slowly and detailed plans are currently being drawn up. The Parish Council will be consulted when they are ready. A lease agreement is being drawn up between the school and Parish Council. The document will be emailed round for consideration at the February meeting. Mr Foley will provide a list of points that the Parish Council will have to consider.

10. To receive an update on the defibrillator

Cllr Benson is still to talk to June Carter about power for the unit. The Parish Clerk advised that another training session will take place in Tadmarton if there is enough interest. Villagers to let the Clerk know if they wish to be involved in the training.

11. Finance Report

Bank balances are as follows:

Current account £10,163.43

Deposit account £17,009.00

Betty Panks Account £4,316.12

The following payment was approved:-

£259.88 to Parish Clerk (hours)

12. Planning

New Applications received

- 15/01951/F, Alterations and erection of single storey side and rear extension at Wykham, Park Lane. Still being considered
- 15/00387/TCA, Fell 1 x Horse Chestnut at Swalcliffe Park School (Five Day Notice)
- 15/01815/F, Alterations and erection of extensions to existing dwelling, and formation of new vehicular access and parking space at Abingdon House, Park Lane. Being considered.

Update on an older application

- 15/01825/F, Single Storey rear extension at 5 Brick Row, the application has been withdrawn

13. Correspondence

The following correspondence had been received:

OPFA Autumn newsletter

OCC, Subsidised buses and Dial A Ride – Cabinet decision

Peter McLoughlin, Garage

Elisabeth Irons, Garage

14. Councillors Reports

The Parish Clerk asked Councillors if they would agree to fund a Children's Christmas party if it goes ahead. The rough cost is £120.00. Cllr's agreed they would.

The Christmas tree will go up this weekend. A note to be put on the Facebook page to ask for help.

Councillors clarified the exact position of the fourth dog bin. The bin will be placed on the left hand side of the school wall, facing the road and placed 2 metres from the road.

Cllr Taylor reported a car which has been parked outside the village hall for ten weeks. Notes have been put on it but actual ownership is unclear. The Parish Clerk to report to the police.

Cllr Stanley spoke about the piece of land which is near to 2 Bakers Lane. The new owners have dug out the old gravel and put new gravel on but the land belongs to the Parish Council.

Cllr Stanley to cut the vegetation back by his property in Bakers Lane.

Meeting Closed 9.25pm