

SWALCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF 20TH OCTOBER 2015 AT 7.00PM IN SWALCLIFFE VILLAGE HALL

Councillors Present

Jane Morgan, Chair (JM)
Jenny Bell (JB)
Ben Benson (BB)
Mick Foley (MF)
Victoria Taylor (VT)
Christine Coles, Parish Clerk (CC) and Kate Foley

1. Apologies

None

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Foley declared an interest as he rents a garage from the Parish Council.
Cllr Melvin declared an interest in a financial payment.
Cllr Taylor declared an interest in a financial payment.

Agenda items were changed due to Cllr Benson having to leave the meeting at 7.30pm.

10. To receive an update on the defibrillator

The Parish Clerk has contacted OCC Highways about putting the defibrillator on the land near the phone box. OCC have confirmed that the owner of the street furniture has to have £10M Public Liability insurance. PU drawings showing water, electric and telephone cables which run underneath were forwarded to the Clerk. The person installing the defibrillator would have to look at these drawings first before commencing installation.

Action: The Parish Clerk to circulate the drawings to Councillors. Cllr Benson to speak to June Carter to ask if the Parish Council can take electric from her property. The annual electric cost is approximately £30 per annum.

9. To discuss the changing of the batteries in the speed indicator sign

Westcotec have been to the village to lower both speed signs. Dan Parish is definitely not able to continue changing the bottom speed sign due to time constraints and wants to hand over the batteries for the bottom sign as soon as possible. Owen Brunsden has offered to change the batteries but he would require access to the village hall to charge them up. Councillors did feel that it might be more practical if someone in the village did the changing. Cllr Bell suggested asking the pub if they would consider changing the bottom sign. The Parish Clerk has ordered two new batteries.

Action: Cllr Taylor to speak to Dan Parish and the pub about changing the batteries..

11. To discuss the future of the garage area

Cllr Melvin noted that she had put some information on Facebook asking people for their views. The basic issues were raised at the meeting on 29th September and different comments and views have been received since then. It was suggested to put the information on the leaflet, on the website and in the Link.

At this point, Cllr Mick Foley noted that he would be resigning from the Parish Council. He passed a resignation letter to the Parish Clerk. He now feels he has to step down in order to discuss the options for the garage area. He said the money available from the sale of land can be used on any project, for the benefit of the village and there is no caveat attached. The village can approach the Parish Council with ideas to consider. Mr Foley is very concerned that the Parish Council will have to get planning approval from CDC and OCC if they want to redesign the garage area. Mr Foley has an idea in the form of an 18 point plan which he will put forward at a later date. In his view, the garage area is causing a lot of upset within the village.

Councillors expressed their sadness on hearing this news but the garage area has always been a sensitive issue. Mr Foley does have an interest which prevents him from taking part in discussions. The Parish Council have been discussing the garage area at Parish Council meetings for the last year and they have to do right for the village. It has to be a collective decision and they have tried to be transparent and open in their discussions.

Action: Cllr Melvin will continue to get views from villagers and this to be discussed at the next meeting. The Parish Clerk to check when the current leases are due for renewal.

3. To approve the minutes of the previous council meeting held on 8th September and 29th September 2015

The minutes of 8th September were approved and signed. The minutes of the 29th September would be amended and approved at the next meeting. The Chair thanked Mr Foley for chairing the meeting on 8th September.

4. Open Forum

There were no members of the public present.

5. Matters Arising

Bird boxes acting as a speed deterrent - To carry forward.

Swalcliffe Park School – An update was received from Mark Williams prior to the meeting. The Parish Clerk to circulate to councillors.

Trough in Park Lane - To carry forward.

Welcome to Swalcliffe Leaflet – The paperwork was handed to Cllr Bell. More research is to be done on phone numbers.

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

Review of Conservation Area – CDC have still not contacted the Parish Clerk.

Assets of community value – To be carried forward.

'No village hall parking' signs – The Chair thanked Cllr Taylor for organising the signs.

Broadband update - A letter from the Chairman of BT was published in the Banbury Guardian newspaper last week. Cllr Bell to circulate.

Speedwatch – Cllr Taylor confirmed that two successful sessions have been carried out recently. There are five dates in the diary for 2016.

Replacement of rotting signpost in Park Lane - This in hand with Highways.

Access to Bacon Farm – The Parish Council do not own the Fuel Allotment.

Village Hall – Mrs Foley confirmed that a rebate from NPower has been received for an amount of £929.16. The monthly direct debit has been reduced to £30.00. Councillors agreed it was a good idea to have an AMR meter installed which is free of charge and can be read remotely. Mrs Foley might be able to negotiate a better single rate with NPower. Mrs Foley is still to get two more quotes for the emergency lighting.

Salt bins – OCC will be filling the bins soon and they will check the state of the existing salt. The Parish Clerk has ordered the free bag of salt to be delivered to Mike Taylor.

Dog leaflet - The leaflet was handed over to Cllr Taylor. Cllr Taylor to liaise with Mr Foley about the distribution of the leaflet to each dog owner. The intention is to give eight poo bags to each dog owner. The Chair and Cllr Bell agreed to distribute.

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

Speed Measuring Equipment – Cllr Taylor to contact Wroxton Parish Council and ask if the exercise, when they used speed measuring equipment, was useful. The Parish Clerk to pass contact details over. Cllr Taylor did briefly discuss this equipment with the PCSO and the equipment gives an average reading. Three letters are sent to offenders and then penalties are issued.

OCC Waste Recycling Consultation – A joint response has already been given.

Oswyn Murray – Nobody was able to attend the recent North Oxon Group meeting held in September. The Parish Clerk to circulate the notes from the meeting.

6. To discuss sharing ideas with neighbouring villages and discussing the impact of local council budget cuts on services previously supplied by OCC

A meeting was held on 21st September and the theme was ‘Oxfordshire Together’. The event was for Town and Parish Councils to explore opportunities for working together across a range of public services to better address the needs of their residents. The main idea by OCC is for them to ‘devolve’ powers to local Town and Parish Councils to carry out some of their services which will otherwise disappear, grass cutting, hedge trimming, drain cleaning etc. In a trade off, OCC will provide free training and ‘some’ equipment, and potentially a cut of their budget.

Cllr Fitzpatrick of Tadmarton Parish Council has contacted all neighbouring villages to discuss sharing services.

There is another open meeting in Oxford on 9th November which is part of the consultation process.

Action: The Parish Clerk to consider going and ask Cllr Fitzpatrick if she would like to come and talk to the Parish Council later on in the year.

7. To receive an update on the Parish Plan

An open meeting was held on 22nd September and was well attended. Cllr Bell thanked Mr Foley and Cllr Taylor for the refreshments and all the Councillors for their support and attendance at the meeting.

There is a meeting planned for 21st October which is to discuss next steps. The groups have now got off the ground. Information has not yet been communicated to those who did not attend the meeting. A notice will be put in the Link and on the website.

8. To receive an update on the Woodland Play Area

A tree survey has been done. Mark Williams at Swalcliffe Parish School is waiting for the report. Mr Foley is to speak to David McLindon and a member of the Parish Council will be invited to the next meeting.

12. 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 payments were approved:-

£193.00 to Gerry Melvin (grass cutting)

£36.00 to BDO LLP (external audit)

£45.76 to Cllr Foley (refreshments for the Parish Plan Open Meeting held on 22.09.15)

An additional three payments were approved, the paperwork was received after the agenda had been issued.

£36.42 to Mr P Beddowes (flipchart pad for Parish Plan meeting)

£72.00 to Mr P Beddowes (Artwork and printing of A6 postcards for Parish Plan)

£150.00 to Cllr Taylor (food at Parish Plan Meeting)

To review the budget to date and to the end of the year (already circulated)

The current budget sheet was reviewed.

To approve an application for a grant from 'the Transparency Fund'

There is a sum of money available for parishes to comply with the Transparency Fund. This can cover set up and cost of time involved. The Parish Clerk to work out the time it will take until the end of March to submit the information for the website.

To approve and accept the Annual Return 2014/15

The Annual Return for 2014/15 was presented to the Council and approved and accepted. There were two issues arising. The first was the asset register which is incomplete. The second was about the Betty Panks Memorial Fund which is an earmarked fund and not a separate trust fund. A note has been made that the Parish Council are not the sole trustee of the charity.

13. Planning

A new application had been received on the day of this meeting.

15/01825/F, Single storey rear extension at 5 Brick Row. Councillors present had no objections. The Parish Clerk to email Cllr Benson with the details as he had left the meeting.

14. Correspondence

The following correspondence had been received:

- CDC, Licensing Act 2003 – Revised Statement of Licensing Policy Consultation
- CDC, Gambling Act 2003 – Revised Statement of Licensing Principles Consultation
- Oxfordshire Association for the Blind – donation request
- OCC, County Council Budget 2016/17 - 2019/20

15. Councillors Reports

A discussion took place about the installation of the fourth dog bin. The best place is outside the school and this was one of the preferred locations mentioned at the Annual Parish Meeting in April. Cllr Taylor did email Mark Williams but the school were not too keen on it being in this place because of photographs. It was agreed to place the bin to the left of the driveway and near to a tree on a roadside grass verge. The school to be contacted before the bin goes in.

Councillors discussed producing an updated leaflet similar to the one which went round before advising of work that the Parish Council is doing. Cllr Taylor to circulate a summary for Councillors to check.

Councillors discussed overhanging hedgerow along the Main Road. The Parish Clerk to write to Della Young, Ray Young, Mr and Mrs Anderson, Mrs Irons and ask Cllr Benson to sweep his horse chestnut tree.

The Parish Clerk has spoken to Mike Stanley and he will reconsider the position of becoming a Councillor in the New Year.

Meeting Closed 9.00pm