

# SWALCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF 12TH AUGUST 2014 AT 7.30PM IN SWALCLIFFE VILLAGE HALL

### **Councillors Present**

Jane Morgan (JM), Chairperson  
Mick Foley (MF), Vice-Chairman  
Jenny Bell (JB)  
Lizzie Melvin (LM)  
Victoria Taylor (VT)  
Christine Coles, Parish Clerk (CC), two villagers and Mrs Irons

### **1. Apologies**

Cllr's Benson and Watkins

### **2. Declarations of Interest**

MF declared an interest as he rents a garage.

### **3. Minutes of last Parish Council meeting and Annual Parish Meeting held on 22<sup>nd</sup> July 2014**

Both sets of minutes were approved and signed.

### **4. Open Forum**

As the three villagers were keen to hear about improvements to the garage area, item 9 was brought forward.

Mr Cooling spoke about Swalcliffe Charities. The old Parish Council collected the wayleave payment and passed it to the charity and then himself. The Common or Swalcliffe Fuel Allotment which it should be known as is charity land and MC has the paperwork. The poor could gather wood but not chop trees down. The custodian of the charity is strictly the Charity Commission but they are not interested in the charity.

### **9. To discuss the garages and improvements to the area**

BB was absent and on behalf of him MF advised that BB has got two quotes to resolve the awful state of the garage area. There is a small area in front of Gillian Brookes garage which has concrete, the other area has a mixture of stone and gravel and the run up to the area has tarmac. Over a period of time, the area has moved. The least expensive option would be to carry on and fill the area with stone when needed. The permanent solution to place tarmac/concrete would cost at least £7-9K. There are soakaway problems and this could not be onto a highway, it would have to be into a banking. There are other problems such as the concrete area in front of Gillians garage which is higher than the rest. The area has flooded in the past, is overused on one side and both areas are moving.

Mr Cooling asked if the councillors were aware that a high voltage cable, which MEB installed, runs underneath the area. He also suggested that if gravel was put down again, it was rolled rather than just laid. He advised that a long time ago he went to Oxford to get a field map for the area. All the fields were numbered. The map showed that this area including the garages, village hall and piece of land next to it was all called the parish pit. This document was passed to the Parish Council at the time.

Mrs Brookes noted that she is unaffected as a builder put down the concrete in front of her garage which was her choice.

Mrs Irons agreed that the area does get bad in winter. Concrete is hefty. A different surfacing like pebbles would be lighter and might help. She advised the meeting that her property is let and her tenants use the garage.

Councillors agreed the area needs to be more user friendly and might be a valuable piece of land. JM added that the additional repair costs may be affected in the current rental price and hirers may be asked to contribute. MF noted that the council had previously discussed getting the land valued and the leases looked at.

LM asked the people present if they had any concerns.

Mrs Brookes asked if anyone had asked for the work to be done? JM replied that MF had mentioned it in the past. She also asked what the cost has been in the past to lay the gravel? The cost is about £130.00 every couple of years.

Mrs Irons concerns are that the garage rent increases each year which she would expect. However to spend £7-9K would be a huge increase to hirers. The area of land was given to the village and if the lease comes to an end, the garage structure has to come down. She agreed the lease needs revising. There has been a lot of history with the garages in the past and a lot of things have happened which have made people wary. She felt the garage should stay with the house and is part of the house value.

Mrs Irons asked if the land would be valued commercially? JM replied that at present the Parish Council are researching all the facts. The wording of the current garage lease refers to the parish pit which is the whole area including the village hall. The lease requires a new name at the top. This will not affect peoples rights. JM added that there are new councillors now and they decided to review all areas that the Parish Council own. The garage land does belong to the Parish Council and the Parish Council charge for the land it is sat on. When the Parish Council have all the relevant information they will arrange a meeting with the garage owners to discuss further.

In conclusion MF said that income from the garages went to the Village Hall Fund and not the Parish Council. In the current accounts book which dates back to 1996, the garage and access rents have always been included in the Parish Council accounts.

## 5. Finance Report

The following payments were approved:-

- £101.68 to Cllr Foley (refreshments for Annual Parish Meeting)
- £170.00 to Gerry Melvin (grass cutting)

It was agreed that a budget sheet should be sent round to each councillor before a meeting to show income and expenditure.

*Action: The Parish Clerk to send round a draft copy. The Parish Clerk to ask for advice on what the sale of land money can be spent on.*

## 6. Planning

One new application had been received by the council:

- 14/00198/TCA, Tree work at Swalcliffe Park School. The Parish Council received the paperwork on 2<sup>nd</sup> August but the School had already been given permission to carry out the tree work. CDC apologised that the Parish Council were not notified when the application was registered on 24<sup>th</sup> June.

MF noted that there should be a list somewhere to say how the listed buildings in the village are graded.

*Action: MF to ask CDC if they have an up to date list.*

7. **Brief update from everyone on their key area of responsibility, priorities, progress and assistance required**  
VT is to catch up with Cassie Kinnaird about Speedwatch.
- MF has suggested to CW that he will continue putting up notices on the board.
- LM advised that she will work on one lease at a time. MF suggested that her workload is shared out as the garage lease is just as important as the Parish Pit lease. If the Parish Pit was to be used as a toddler play area the lease would have to be renegotiated.
- JM has produced a draft strategic plan.
- Councillors agreed that it would be useful to keep in contact with Jeff Demmar and Maurice Cooling as they know a lot of history of the village. Mr Demmar did note at the APM that the Swalcliffe Society were struggling to get members. They could both be invited to a meeting.
8. **Village Hall - To nominate a Parish Council representative for the Village Hall Committee**  
The minutes of the last village hall meeting have been circulated. VT agreed to be the Parish Council representative on the Village Hall committee. She agreed to make contact with them. The next meeting is on 25<sup>th</sup> September.
10. **To discuss how to move the Community Led Plan forward**  
JB advised the meeting that Alan Foulkes who attended the Annual Parish Meeting has left ORCC. His replacement is Tom McCulloch. JB has asked Tom if they have any examples of flyers to hold a launch meeting. Sibford and Epwell have both produced plans. It would be a good idea to invite them to a meeting to talk about the process, if there are any pitfalls and how to sell the idea. It is important to keep the momentum going. Councillors could use the Harvest Supper to talk about the idea.  
*Action: The Parish Clerk to invite members of Sibford Ferris and Epwell PC to a meeting. JB to arrange a meeting with Tom McCulloch and use the Link to keep everyone updated. A village meeting to be planned for early November.*
11. **To receive an update on the progress of work to the Betty Panks Garden**  
The Parochial church Council obtained three quotes for the removal of the trees. It was agreed to proceed with the quote from CTS Forestry. The cost will be £350.00 and will include the grinding of the stumps. The holly tree and lilac tree will be pruned at the same time at no extra cost to the Parish Council. The invoice will be sent to the Parish Council.
12. **To discuss future surgery dates and volunteers**  
It was noted that where possible, dates should be put in the Link and in the Banbury Guardian. This will be put on hold for the moment as recent surgeries have been quiet. An idea of picking subjects to be discussed at surgeries was suggested for the future.
13. **To discuss feedback from the Annual Parish Meeting, villager requests for action, next steps to keep village engagement, potential joint projects**  
The Annual Parish Meeting was very well attended.
14. **To discuss key village papers and fireproof cabinets**  
The Parish Clerk has started to clear the filing cabinets and is throwing away old planning paperwork which takes up the bulk of the cabinets. She has researched the price of new fireproof cabinets and the cheapest are £1K each. A second hand one from Ebay can be purchased for £225.00 approximately.

15. To discuss the brief and date for meeting with highways

BB was absent from the meeting but Highways have confirmed they will only attend a day time meeting. The Parish Clerk to forward the issues of concern to Highways.

Meeting Closed 9.50pm