

# **SWALCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL**

## **MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF 18TH JUNE 2014 AT 7.30PM IN SWALCLIFFE VILLAGE HALL**

### **Councillors Present**

Jane Morgan (JM), Chairperson  
Mick Foley (MF), Vice-Chairman  
Jenny Bell (JB)  
Ben Benson (BB)  
Lizzie Melvin (LM)  
Victoria Taylor (VT)  
Charlotte Watkins (CW)  
Christine Coles, Parish Clerk (CC)

Barbara Taylor and Sarah Beveridge from Swalcliffe Park Equestrian Ltd, six villagers and Mr Grimston from Sibford

### **1. Apologies**

None

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

VT declared an interest in the planning application at Swalcliffe Park Equestrian Ltd.

### **3. Minutes of last meeting held on 8th April 2014 and 27<sup>th</sup> May 2014**

Both sets of minutes were approved and signed.

### **4. Matters Arising from the previous meeting**

To carry forward to the next meeting.

### **5. To visit the Parish Pit area and discuss/agree the wording of the lease**

Councillors visited the area. The lease would be discussed at the next meeting.

### **6. To visit the garage area and discuss improvements to the surface and drainage**

Councillors visited the garage area. The garages were built to bring income to the village hall. The Parish Council own the land and charge rent and the individual owns the garage. The Parish Clerk to get three quotes to improve the surface and drainage.

### **7. To discuss administration tasks for Facebook and Parish Council pages on the website**

It was agreed there would be two people responsible for admin on Facebook to keep control over what is put on. They would be LM and BB. CW agreed to put a précis of the minutes in the Link.

### **8. To discuss Parish Council key papers, filing and access to them**

To carry forward to the next meeting.

### **9. To discuss the area in front of the school and how to protect it from misuse**

To carry forward to the next meeting.

### **10. Planning applications**

- *14/00163/TCA, Remove 14 Leylandii at St Peter and St Pauls Church, Main Road.* For the purpose of the new councillors, a visit was made to the area before the meeting began.

It was agreed that the Betty Panks garden does require some pruning back. The Parish Clerk to get three quotes for the work. The Parish Council were told informally that the disabled ramp might be put in a different place and its new position may not affect the Betty Panks Garden.

*Action: The Parish Clerk to ask Mr Ralph if the PCC would consider withdrawing the tree application. The PCC to be invited to the next meeting.*

- *14/00801/F, Use of land for mixed use comprising equestrian training/competitions (use class D2) and agriculture, together with extension of existing vehicle parking area at Swalcliffe Park Equestrian Ltd (SPE), Grange Lane.*

Barbara Taylor (BT) explained the planning application in more detail. SPE are applying for change of use of a large area of about 60 acres. It is currently used for agricultural purposes but they would like mixed use, some equestrian and to carry on with the agricultural business. The areas will be utilised for different events and training. The majority will be for training on a daily basis with 10-15 horses. There are larger events which are good for PR. SPE will continue to run competitions within the 28 day rule and cross country schooling and this application is to solidify that arrangement. They have asked for an extension to the car park to enable people who attend smaller functions to park nearby. By extending the car park will take the traffic away from neighbouring properties who have concerns. Another concern raised is the PA which is used for larger events. A PA is used for 18 days each year and there is a list of dates which have been booked. BT agreed to let villagers know when the events would be taking place.

1 in March (2 days)

3 in April (1 day)

1 in May (1 day)

1 in August (3 days)

1 in September (1 day)

1 in October (1 day)

The Chair spoke about the car park in front of the stables which was approved but is quite a small area. There are people living at the stables already who have vehicles and the land can take ten trucks. Cllr Foley noted that in the past Park Lane has been seriously affected as vehicles drive down and then have to reverse back. He felt there must be clear no entry signs and lorries not being able to turn left into Park Lane. BT replied that if the application is successful, then they will apply for proper official signage. Google maps and the website definitely advise drivers not to use Park Lane but an official sign would help and it would have to be placed prior to the turning before Park Lane. Sarah Beveridge (SB) noted that for larger events, a traffic management plan is put in place and they liaise closely with OCC Highways.

The Chair spoke about concerns being an increase in traffic which will have an effect on the roads which are already in a very poor condition and parking in front of neighbouring properties. SB replied that not all traffic goes to Grange Farm and lorries often use that road as a cut through to the clinics in Milcombe. In the past OCC Highways have not had an issue with traffic as it does not exceed their limitations. Cllr Foley asked BT and SB if they have looked at the feasibility of traffic coming in through Wigginton or going out that way. SB replied that a one way system can only be implemented with the involvement of the police. Cllr Foley then suggested the idea of a bypass but there is not enough traffic to warrant this. SB noted that all these options have been looked at.

From the floor, Mr Beddowes asked SB if she expected the business to grow? SB advised that she runs the events and her partner Richard is away between the months of April to September. Therefore they could not physically do anything more and they expect the current level of activity to stay as it is.

Mrs Boycott thanked the Parish Council for the opportunity to meet. When the application was submitted before, those in favour of it, lived further away. This affects the wider community as a whole and is long term. The neighbours have had to deal with these concerns for two and half years now and they just want to protect the wider community. They hope the Parish Council will reach an unbiased decision.

Mr Grimston spoke on behalf of the neighbours to raise their concerns. The first being that the application is very vague. He wanted to know the intention of SPE, is it going to be up to 50 riders per day as the current level is 10-20 riders? People are to think very carefully as to what this could mean as the volume of the business could be increased by 5 times. Young people are ambitious and the site might grow in future years. Parking is for 30 vehicles but the application is for 50 riders. Where are the other 20 vehicles going to park? Under the 28 day rule and permitted development rights, the area can be used for non agricultural purposes without planning consent. Some of these issues are not covered by this rule and he asked the question 'What constitutes a day?' He felt there needed to be more clarification.

Mrs Vandamme felt that some of the issues were the access gates and access to site. When there are big events on, parking is an issue outside neighbouring houses and there are between 600-800 vehicles which create more noise. There can be over 500 riders, 500 cars with families, judges, loud speakers and toilets. If the two gates are blocked up and access allowed from the other end this might be acceptable. The smell is an issue. Another issue is that equipment is left out and it looks very unsightly. If the field is turned into a riding school to be used 365 days per year, the equipment will be left out permanently. SB replied that during daylight hours, entries are restricted. Out of 250 riders on a day, 25% are multiple riders and can enter up to 5 horses. These events are at an amateur professional level.

Mr Grimston asked SB for a list of event dates. He then said that 80% of the problem was traffic and access. He asked why traffic could not come from the gated road. BT replied it is up to CDC to decide. The Parish Council may consider this point in their response.

Cllr Foley asked if the proposed parking area could be enlarged. If there was another grassed area to put more vehicles on it would relieve the pressure from the neighbours. BT replied that the area is more discreet in a field and CDC would not want to see an area that has tarmac on it.

Cllr Benson asked if there would be fifty riders arriving at one time? The answer was no.

Mrs Carter asked if it would be possible for a private track to be put in through a field? BB replied that in his experience, it would be very costly. However it might be a long term solution and investment.

Cllr Foley asked BT and SB if they would consider postponing this application for another week or two to look at the points raised tonight. BT replied that she is happy to let it stand as the matter needs to be sorted out. SB advised that the points raised tonight have been raised before and they have evidence of this. BT noted that they had no intention to fall out with the village.

Mr Beddowes felt that the big events are not part of this application and suggested that a working party are set up to discuss the plans. There must be positive solutions to problems which can then be talked and worked through. Less traffic through Swalcliffe would be a good thing as the road is dangerous.

The Chair thanked BT and SB for coming to the meeting and they left the room. As there is more time before the Parish Council have to give their response, Councillors were advised to think about the information received tonight and make their decision.

**10. Financial Report**

*The following payments were approved:*

£16.00 to OALC (Order of Good Councillor Guide books)

£129.35 to Cllr Foley (for the purchase of a leaving present for Julie Carpenter)

£300.85 to Parish Clerk (hours)

£66.49 to Parish Clerk (expenses)

Cheques to be signed at a later date as new signatories have not been confirmed yet.

**11. Correspondence received:-**

ORCC, Workshop on consultation methods for Community Led Plans

Cllr I Hudspeth, Connecting Oxfordshire

Green Dragon Rare Breeds Farm, Orchard Planning Workshop 28<sup>th</sup> June

**12. Councillors Reports**

Councillors briefly discussed the Annual Parish Meeting and attendees. The Police will be first on the agenda as they will be on duty and will want to leave soon after. Other speakers to talk for 10-15 mins each. VT agreed to provide refreshments and MF to purchase the drinks.

*Action: VT to advise of cost.*

**13. Date and time of next meeting**

Tuesday 8<sup>th</sup> July 2014 at 7.30pm.

Meeting Closed 10.00pm