

SWALCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF 22ND JANUARY 2013 AT 7.30PM IN SWALCLIFFE VILLAGE HALL

Councillors Present

Julie Carpenter (JC)

Jane Gallick (JG)

Mick Foley (MF)

Mike Taylor (MT)

Mike Stanley (MS)

Charlotte Watkins (CW)

Christine Coles, Parish Clerk (CC) and two members of the public

1. Apologies

Cllr Bradshaw

2. Declarations of Interest

MT declared an interest in the planning application for an anaerobic digestion facility and the subject of the bridleway at Bacon Farm.

3. Minutes of last meeting held on 27th November 2012

The minutes were agreed and signed as a true record of the meeting.

4. Matters Arising from the previous meeting

Registration of Swalcliffe Common - Ongoing.

White gates to mark entrances to the village - There is no further news.

Undergrowth in churchyard - A thank you card and cheque payment were sent to Gerry Melvin.

Plant for wellhead - MS to ask Jeff Demmar for advice on which plant to put in.

Parish Pit - There is no further news on this.

Work to land behind village hall - MT has received one detailed expensive quote for remedial work to be carried out in front of the garage area. MT to get a second quote.

To extend parking area at the Village Hall - It was noted that residents are considerate when events are held in the hall and they have to park elsewhere.

Speed signs/data - Doug Seymour had emailed speedwatch figures. The maximum speed was 38mph and speed has reduced generally. The speed signs at both ends of the village are tripped approximately 700 times every 24 hours. Doug Seymour is waiting for this years dates from PCSO Angela Alford. Currently the emphasis is away from speedwatch and focused on rural burglaries.

Missing 'Park Lane' sign - A new road sign has been ordered via Cherwell District Council and will take six weeks.

New Bus Shelter - The Chair had contacted Oxfordshire County Council. They would be happy to arrange a site meeting, place an order (price range between £4K and £5K) and arrange its installation. It will be the responsibility of Swalcliffe Parish Council (SPC) to ensure the installation will not contravene any local conservation area rules. SPC will also be responsible for the upkeep of the shelter after installation, such as insurance, maintenance and repairs etc.

Action: The Chair to contact OCC again.

Bench outside the church - The bench has not been taken away yet.

Trimming of trees on the Green - CDC have advised that they have placed a TPO on the two lime trees on the Green. The official paperwork was passed to the Clerk for filing.

Brick work in the wall by the steps to the stream in Bakers Lane. - MS contacted Mr McNally but has had no response

Action: JC to contact Mr McNally.

Flooding in Park Lane - The Clerk emailed OCC Highways who advised that they believe there are more pressing problems with the drainage system. In their opinion the drainage system is not designed for the amount of water that it has to cope with as Park Lane takes the run off water from the surrounding fields. MF has also carried out some work to help the drainage.

Action: The Parish Clerk to contact OCC Highways again for an update and MT to look at unblocking some drains before the next meeting.

Christmas Party - Thanks was given to Kate Foley and Doug Seymour.

Bacon Farm - The owners of Bacon Farm had asked MT what the PC response had been after the last meeting about upgrading the bridleway as it is in a bad state of repair. The Parish Council do not own the bridleway. The Chair suggested that the owners write to this Parish Council with their proposals.

5. To discuss and agree the setting of the precept for 2013/14

Before discussion of the precept, the Clerk advised that a letter had been received from CDC saying that the CDC Executive Committee had agreed that the full grant provided by central government to cover losses due to the Council Tax Reduction Scheme should be allocated to parishes. This represents 86% of the total funding required by parishes. The allocation proposal is that all parishes which receive a precept will receive the same 86% of their shortfall. In Swalcliffe's case the total shortfall will be £258.36 and the government grant passed on will therefore be £223.00. A further £35.36 will be provided from CDC funds in 2013/14.

The letter encouraged parish councils to make plans to cover this shortfall in future years and also to be aware that rises in precept may be capped by the government after 2013/14.

A sheet detailing income and expenditure had been circulated.

It was resolved to set the precept at £5500.00 and to accept the grant from CDC.

Action: The Parish Clerk to reply to CDC.

6. Planning applications

□ *12/01588/F, Proposed on-farm anaerobic digestion facility at land east of Stourwell Barn*
MT advised the meeting that a digestion facility makes cheap electricity for farmers out of waste products. It is the most friendly out of the wind turbines and solar panels. Anything that produces gas such as maize, grass and sugar beet is put into a tank. The gas is collected and an engine with a generator makes electricity to send to the grid. It is in a container and there would be no noise or smell. The digestate is put back on the land and farmers do not have to buy organic fertilizers. There is no danger to the public. These facilities are very common in Germany and there are currently 15 running in the UK. The council would be raising no objections.

□ *12/01772/F, Construction of a tennis court at the Mount, Green Lane.*
The plans were put out on the table for everyone to see. A pre-application enquiry was made by the applicant and CDC visited the site on 11th September 2012. The application will be determined at officer level this time. The councillors looked at the measurements and the distance between the court and hedgerow is 4m (the legal requirement is 1m). There would be a 12 foot high fence around the court. From the paperwork it was not clear if change of use has to be applied for first or whether that automatically happens when the application is considered. Change of use would be given just for the tennis court (area marked in red on the plan). The documentation states that the court will not be seen from neighbouring properties but this is incorrect and it will be seen.

From the floor, Mrs Moir of Madmarston View advised that she would be objecting to the change of use of the land. The tennis court will be very close to her boundary and visible from her kitchen. There are other tennis courts around but these are out of the way of neighbours and not so intrusive. Mrs Moir has asked Cllr George Reynolds if this particular application can be determined by Planning Committee level and not officer level.

The application was originally submitted in 2008 but withdrawn by the applicant. Mrs Moir quoted comments that were made in 2008 by the CDC Conservation Officer, Rose Todd and are available to see on the CDC public domain site. In her mind none of these facts, such as loss of open character, outside a built area and unacceptable impact on character have changed.

The councillors then voted on objecting to the change of use of the land from agricultural to domestic in a conservation area. A unanimous vote was recorded which subsequent to the meeting has been amended to read a majority vote.

Action: MS to reply to CDC.

□ *12/01730/F, Velux rooflight to north elevation at The Hayloft, Park Lane.* No objections would be made.

7. To consider a donation request from 'The Link' magazine

It was agreed to give a donation of £80.00.

8. Financial Report

The following payments were approved at the meeting:

- £858.18 to Broker Network Ltd (Council insurance renewal)
- £125.00 to Swalcliffe Village Hall (hire of hall for meetings)
- £55.12 to Julie Carpenter (Christmas party expenses)
- £40.30 to Doug Seymour (Christmas lights)

9. Correspondence

- Email from CDC, Recycling. CDC have asked if they can put a set of bottle banks at the village hall for the community to use. This would be on a temporary basis to see if they are used or not. The sites will be cleaned and emptied regularly by Cherwell District Council staff. SPC would have the opportunity to earn £200 per year. It was agreed not to take this any further.
- Thames Valley Police, Details of a new community messaging system. Details to be put on the notice-board.
- Email from The Banbury and North Oxfordshire Ramblers Group asking if anyone is willing to be a parish path warden. The purpose would be to have somebody who would patrol the parish twice a year to report back on any problems such as dangerous stiles and footbridges. Cllr Watkins agreed to be the contact.
- Email from Richard Pinchin of Tadmarton Parish Council to note that Cynth Napper of Oxfordshire Nature Conservation Forum will be visiting Tadmarton village hall on 21st March at 7.30pm to give a presentation on ways to help the natural environment. MS and MF agreed to attend.

Action: The Clerk to forward the email to councillors.

10. Councillors Reports

SPC thanked Adrian and MT for their help in clearing the snow. The Parish Clerk advised that a grit bin on the Main Road in Broughton had been completely emptied by a van passing by recently.

MS noted that when walking up from the Green, the main road appears to have sunk and there are cracks in the side of the main carriageway. The road surface is poor too.

Action: The Parish Clerk to report to OCC Highways.

MF suggested the village to consider buying a defibrillator which can be shared between other close villages. To be discussed in more detail at the next meeting.

SPC briefly spoke about Neighbourhood Planning. Adderbury, Hook Norton and Shutford are starting their own plans. To be put on the agenda for the next meeting.

Action: The Clerk to forward some notes to councillors on the subject.

The Chair thanked Cllr Taylor for his help with the Christmas tree. The future site of the Christmas tree to be discussed at another meeting.

11. Date and time of next meeting

6th March 2013

Meeting Closed 9.30pm