

SWALCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD 4th SEPTEMBER 2023 AT 7.30PM IN SWALCLIFFE VILLAGE HALL

Councillors Present

Nicola Borkmann (NB)
Martin Collett (MC)
Ken Hodkinson (KH)
Ryan Smith (RS)
Stephen Warrington (SW)

Christine Coles - Parish Clerk and four villagers

23/66. Apologies

Cllr Gandy (personal) and Cllr Taylor (personal)

23/67. Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

23/68a. To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 3rd May and 26th June 2023

The minutes of the last two meetings were approved and signed.

23/68b. To note any matters arising from the minutes not included on this agenda

There has been no decision yet about the Tadmorton Livery planning application. CDC were waiting for advice from their own Agricultural consultant.

23/69. Public Participation Session

A villager spoke about the overgrown vegetation by Tithe Barn which is dangerous when pulling out. The land is owned by the Trust and a farmer. People are parking by Tithe Barn to go to the play area. A quote for a new playground sign was obtained three years ago but a decision never made to get one. The Parish Clerk to find the old quote and circulate.

Two villagers spoke in support of Cllr Borkmann's wildflower project. 'No Mow May' has seen a notable increase in swifts. The public perception is changing. Grass verges are perfect corridors for insects.

A villager spoke about Speedwatch which is organised by a Parish Councillor who works full time. There is a list of volunteers but the same people are doing the checks. She felt that more trained people could help out and share the load. The Clerk noted this may be the last session due to the evenings drawing in. It is hoped that a rota can be drawn up next year.

Action: Cllr Collett agreed to look at the vegetation obscuring the view when leaving the Tithe Barn. Cllrs agreed to consider how increasing the number and willingness of volunteers for Speedwatch could be achieved before sessions begin again in 2024.

23/70. To discuss a Parish Environmental Plan

Cllr Borkmann has been investigating areas to improve biodiversity and locate suitable areas within the village that could be planted with wildflowers. She has identified three areas that are suitable. The times to spread seeds are now and April. Cllr Borkmann had spoken to Tadmorton who have wildflower verges in place already. Councillors were in agreement with the principle but wanted an

idea of costs and maintenance. It was agreed that Cllr Borkmann could proceed with the three identified areas and a budget of up to £100 was also agreed to support the purchasing of wildflower seeds. Cllr Borkmann will contact the ground maintenance contractor to advise not to cut those areas and copy in the Parish Clerk so she is also aware of communication with the contractor

Cllr Borkmann would like to make contact with the owners of Tithe Barn to explore using the area in front for wildflower planting. It was agreed she could continue to liaise with them.

There is an area behind the wall in the Church Garden which Cllr Borkmann also hopes will become a wildflower area, subject to separate discussions and agreement with the Church. Cllr Borkman will involve the school in her discussions, to explore the extent to which they feel able to be engaged with the Parish Councils environmental plans. A villager advised her to contact Berks, Bucks and Oxon Wildlife Trust who may be able to help.

Action: Cllr Borkmann to progress plans as agreed.

23/71. To discuss a Parish Communication Plan (including GDPR)

Cllr Warrington gave the following update. Progress has been made in getting villagers signed up to the village mailing list, with 48 households signed up so far. Cllr Warrington had identified households who may not know about the plan. Areas of the village were allocated to Councillors to inform and encourage signing up.

Draft guidelines governing the use of the mailing list were circulated. These intended to ensure reasonable use and informative content. It was all agreed to accept them.

The Parish Council will have to register with the ICO. The annual cost is £40.00. A proportionate policy about holding this data will be drawn up and it was noted that the guidance from NALC was a helpful reference point to start from.

Action: The Parish Clerk to register with the ICO. The Parish Clerk to find a template policy about holding data and circulate.

23/72. To discuss Parish Governance & Charity Project (including approval of Play Park Committee - TOR)

Cllr Collett gave the following update. He has obtained legal advice on the process of setting up a charity. There is still a lot of work to be done. A CIO (Charity Incorporated Organisation) will be explored. Cllr Collett has the original documents such as Deeds of Trust for the village hall. He and Cllr Borkmann were continuing to consult with other stakeholders within the village and hoped to report back fully on recommendations in the near future.

The updated Play Park Committee Terms of Reference were circulated. They have been refreshed and are less onerous. Cllr Collett explained the finances. There is a sum of money in a Parish Council bank account to be used by the Play Park Committee. They have their own account and raise money through fund raising. It was agreed to accept the Terms of Reference.

23/73. To receive an update on the siting of the Platinum Jubilee bench

The bench is now in place outside the play park. Cllr Collett thanked Cllr Warrington for storing it. It has been insured. Thanks was given to Ben Benson for his efforts in adapting and installing the bench and also to James and Roger for their assistance. Conversations are ongoing with OCC about the original idea of placing it outside Tithe Barn.

23/74. To receive an update on the Parish Development Plan

Cllr Warrington gave the following update. A draft survey was circulated and feedback given. The detail will be put into Survey Monkey. The survey can be completed online or in paper form. Cllr Warrington will engage with local businesses and the Chair of the School Governors.

23/75. To receive an update on the Speedwatch project

A third session has taken place and the same people are helping. The sessions are providing evidence to show speeding is a problem. At the last session 17 vehicles were speeding over 35mph and the highest speed was 46mph. This may be the last session this year. A rota will be set up for next year. The speed sign at the bottom of the village is not working. It is over ten years old.

Action: The Parish Clerk to get a price for a new VAS.

23/76. Financial Report

The following payments were approved under statutory powers:

- £35.00 to Community First (membership)
- £800.00 To Andrew Bathe (grass cutting)
- £699.44 to Mr S Gandy (village hall expenditure)
- £646.56 To Parish Clerk (hours)
- £73.96 to Parish Clerk (mileage)

Cllr Collett spoke about the payment to Cllr Gandy for village hall expenditure. Cllr Gandy has agreed to give a donation of £1K to the village hall refurbishment and forgo costs he has personally funded to this value. Parish Councillors noted and appreciated the efforts and generosity of Cllr Gandy. The payment of £699.47 is the remaining amount to be paid to him.

The Parish Clerk spoke about the Betty Panks account. £5,000 was left to the Parish Council in 2008 and was to be used for the upkeep of the part of the church garden that she had planted. There is £540.22 left in the account. The Parish Clerk has emailed the PCC to ask for ideas to spend the money.

23/77. To receive an update on planning

- 23/02143/F, Alterations to existing Annexe Outbuilding (Converted Garage as approved under planning permissions 95/00256/F & 96/01071/F) to involve new pitched roofs over existing shed roof dormers, new external doors and windows the addition of a stove and flue, internal stair and other associated minor internal alterations at Swalcliffe House, Grange Lane. Supported by PC.
- Enforcement notice served on Fairview Cottage, Main Road by CDC.

23/78. To receive the following correspondence

- OCC, Road closure on Park Lane (18.09.23-22.09.23)
- OCC, Preparing for Winter. It was agreed to order a free bag of salt and for delivery to be arranged with Cllr Taylor, whose family had kindly agreed to store it until needed.
- CDC, Local Plan Review. The public consultation will begin soon.

23/79. To receive Councillors Reports

The cherry tree outside the play area which is on highland land is dead.

Action: The Parish Clerk to report on Fix My Street.

Cllr Smith will get prices to replace the broken Christmas lights.

It was agreed that a Christmas party for the children should be organised again. It was a great success last year. Cllr Smith to liaise with others.

23/80. To note next meeting date and time

Monday 16th October 2023 at 7.30pm

There being no other business the meeting closed at 9.15pm.