

# SWALCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

## MINUTES OF A PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD 8<sup>th</sup> JANUARY 2024 AT 7.30PM IN SWALCLIFFE VILLAGE HALL

### ***Councillors Present***

Nicola Borkmann (NB)  
Martin Collett (MC)  
Ryan Smith (RS)  
Victoria Taylor (VT)  
Stephen Warrington (SW)

Christine Coles - Parish Clerk

The meeting was Chaired by Cllr Collett in the absence of Cllr Gandy.

**24/01. Apologies**  
Cllr Gandy (personal)

**24/02. Declarations of Interest**  
No interests were declared.

**24/03a. To approve the minutes of the meetings held on 27<sup>th</sup> November 2023**  
The minutes of the last meeting were approved and signed.

**24/03b. To note any matters arising from the minutes not included on this agenda**  
Bottom VAS – There is no update.

Victoria Taylor, Mike Taylor, Richard Taylor, Ryan and Ali Smith were thanked for all their help at Christmas with the tree, lights, and children's party. The success of the carol service organised by the PCC was also noted and Cllr Warrington was thanked for his role in this.

The salt ordered via Highways should have been delivered a few weeks ago. The Parish Clerk to chase.

**24/04. Public Participation Session**  
There were no members of the public present.

**24/05. Financial Report**  
*To note the NALC revised salary scale for the Clerk for 2023/24 with the amount backdated to April*  
An increase was awarded by NALC before Christmas. The amount was agreed and the Clerk will move to the next point on the scale.

*The following payments were approved under statutory powers:*

- £125.00 to A Bathe (work to Betty Panks Garden)
- £259.22 to Andy Darby Electrical (work to fix defibrillator and light)
- £46.67 to ABC Advertising (annual emails)
- £180.00 to Swalcliffe Village Hall (hire of hall for meetings)
- £715.95 to Parish Clerk (hours)

- £49.50 to Parish Clerk (mileage)

*To set the precept for 2024/25*

A detailed income and expenditure sheet was circulated by the Chair prior to the meeting modelling increases of 6%, 7% and 8%. Estimated expenditure for the coming year is £10,282.00. It was agreed that as some costs will increase this year the precept should be increased by 8%. The amount for 2024/25 will be set at £9206.00.

*Action: The Parish Clerk to notify CDC.*

*To acknowledge the CDC grant awarded to the Swalcliffe Village Hall*

A grant of £8354.00 has been awarded to the Village Hall by Cherwell District Council. The grant has to be match funded and used by December 2024. To be discussed at a future meeting.

**24/06. To receive an update on planning**

- 23/03040/F and 23/0362/LB, Replacement of glass door and 3 x blown windows and Replacement of blown windows with wooden bi-folds (retrospective) at Tithings House, 6 The Tithings. No comment by PC.
- 23/02359/F, Change of use of farmland to equestrian use, erection of barn for stabling, outdoor exercise arenas and associated works at Hill Farm, Bakers Lane. Granted by CDC.

Amended plans for the Old Grange were received after the agenda had been issued.

23/03165/F, Amended plans received to move parking area of the trees and reduce projection of eastern extension, and a tree survey has been submitted at The Old Grange, Grange Lane. It was agreed on this occasion to contact the neighbour who had raised concerns before and alert them to amended plans viewable with CDC.

**24/07. To receive the following correspondence**

- Villager, Infill at garage area. The hole was reported by a tenant of the garages owned by SPC and is in the shared access area to the garages. All tenants have to agree the quote. The details have been passed to Mike Taylor to quote. The garage rent renewals were sent out in December and were due on 1<sup>st</sup> January. There is one payment outstanding. There is a discretion to apply a penalty of 9.25% if payment is not received within 14 days.
- OCC, Road Closure Banbury Road, North Newington 5<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> March 2024.

**24/08. To receive Councillors Reports**

The salt bin opposite the church was damaged by a delivery driver before Christmas. Highways have agreed to replace it and a request has been acknowledged that the replacement bin be placed further back from the road.

Councillors responsibilities have been agreed. The list on the website will be updated.

Cllr Warrington gave an update on the village survey. Two workshop discussion evenings (29<sup>th</sup> January and 12<sup>th</sup> February) with refreshments will be held in the Village Hall and parishioners invited. Results and themes will be discussed. Data tables will be available to view. Cllr Warrington and two Councillors will attend each event.

*Action: The Parish Clerk to book the Village Hall. Cllr Warrington to promote the events to parishioners.*

Cllr Borkmann gave an update on the Environmental Plan.

Many local Councils are taking part in the 'No Mow May' initiative for environmental reasons. It will be a careful balancing act. From the map, areas 3, 4, 5, 7 and 11 are to be cut in May.

Cllr Borkmann has spoken to Adrian Cooper to seek cooperation to enhance wildflower planting along the verges coming into the village and the preparation of wildflower planting areas are in hand. Discussions have begun with relevant parties concerning wildflower planting in front of Tithe Barn. Discussions are yet to happen with Swalcliffe Park School. There is a new herb and bulb area in the churchyard.

Councillors discussed ensuring parishioners were aware of intended plans and the trial areas where wildflower planting was planned. There was a broader discussion on the value of being open about plans and recognising the need for a balanced approach, given the range of views felt to exist. An explanatory email on the approach would be circulated to parishioners and published on the village website after the next SPC meeting, to ensure transparency.

*Action: The Parish Clerk to ask Andrew Bathe to quote for 2024.*

Speedwatch was discussed. The importance of forward planning and making use of the volunteers was noted. It was agreed that clarity should be sought on dates when Swalcliffe would have access to equipment and these should be communicated to volunteers, so that collective efforts could be applied reducing the burden on a few key individuals. Making use of the volunteer WhatsApp group was encouraged. Increasing the pool of local volunteers for this initiative might be possible at the planned village survey events. Cllr Taylor proposed that a fund raising event could be organised to raise money for new speed signs, for example a race night in the Village Hall. The current signs are twelve years old.

*Action: The Parish Clerk to ask Broughton PC if a new rota has been agreed. Cllr Taylor to support Cllr Hodgkinson once the new dates are known.*

Cllr Collett gave an update on the Governance Review. He has chased the lawyer and they will look at suggested articles. The village fund has been overstated and clarity was being sought about the current balance held.

The Christmas lights outside the village hall and pub looked nice but some did not work. Some will need replacing.

*Action: Cllr Smith to look in the sale.*

**24/09. To note meeting dates for 2024**

19<sup>th</sup> February, 8<sup>th</sup> April (Annual Parish Meeting), 20<sup>th</sup> May, 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2<sup>nd</sup> September, 14<sup>th</sup> October and 18<sup>th</sup> November.

There being no other business the meeting closed at 8.45pm.