

SWALCLIFFE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING OF 16th FEBRUARY 2016 AT 7.00PM IN SWALCLIFFE VILLAGE HALL

Councillors Present

Jane Morgan (JM)
Jenny Bell (JB)
Lizzie Melvin (LM)
Ryan Smith (RS)
Victoria Taylor (VT)
Christine Coles, Parish Clerk (CC)

Ten villagers and Mark Williams of Swalcliffe Park School

1. Apologies

Cllr's Benson and Stanley

2. Declarations of Interest

Cllr Bell and Cllr Morgan declared an interest in the discussion of flooding in Park Lane.
Cllr Melvin declared an interest in the grass mowing.

3. Planning

Two applications had been received since the last meeting:-

15/02119/F and 16/00035/LB, Installation of external security lighting at Swalcliffe Park School.

Cathy Stoertz (CS), Chair of Governors at Swalcliffe Park School reported that the school has put in a planning application for an external security lighting scheme around the school. This would provide the health and safety requirements for staff, pupils and visitors. The school is aware that there has been a mish mash system in the past and the previous system was not suitable for its purpose. The school employed a designer to look at the site and design a new system. This will provide adequate lighting for footpaths and around the buildings. The light fixtures will be more focused and send light down. They will be controllable and be on timers and light sensors. The school recognizes that light currently shines into properties. All the drawings and information relative to the application are on the CDC planning portal. The objective is to provide for health and safety for all whilst alleviating the inconvenience and light spill that has an impact on the surrounding area.

The Chair asked why the lights would need to be on all night? CS replied that this was what the school felt was required. This is a residential school and people are moving about at all hours.

Cllr Smith asked if the existing lighting system would be taken down? CS replied that the old lighting system would be completely replaced in lower locations. In some places the poles are lower than the boundary wall. Issues have been raised in the past and these have been eliminated. Other poles are higher, light will focus down and poles will be screened by trees.

From the floor, Peter Beddowes, Trustee of the School noted that the new system will have more flexibility. The school is open 24/7 and 80 staff come and go all the time. If the lights were on night sensor they would be on and off all the time which he felt would be worse.

Cllr Smith asked if the expert decided there would be less or more impact? There should be less impact and the Anti Social Behavioural Officer has written a report to say there is a considerable improvement.

Mr Carter of Swallows lives in the property which backs onto the school. He moved into the property in September 2013. He has encountered problems in the past before but the school have always co-operated.

His main concern now is if the application is approved and the staff feel that their safety is jeopardised, would the lighting levels be increased to reflect this? CS replied that the details are in the plan. It is not the schools intention to turn the lights onto full strength all night. The final decision will be made by CDC planning and conditions may be imposed.

Mr Ralph of Old Forge Yard spoke as the closest neighbour to the school. He has lived there for twenty years. He admires the work of the school and wishes them to thrive and prosper. However the last two years have been awful. He is concerned as a neighbour and the paperwork supporting the planning application is riddled with inaccuracies. The application was for the installation of 66 lights but that has now increased to 77 lights. He compared an LED light which is 4.5 watts to these lights which are 14 watts nominal. 55 lights will be 14 watts, 10 will be 28 watts and 15 will be 35 watts. This would mean the area will be largely lit. If a neighbour were to ask for planning permission for 77 lights they would be refused permission. These are normal lighting requirements for streets in towns although some areas of Banbury have dispensed with street lighting. His opinion is that the lights do not need to be on all the time. The pub sign has to be turned off at 10.30pm. These lights will not be controllable. Mr Ralph also noted the height of the lights. There are 42 at 8ft, 10 at 6.5ft and 12 at 14ft (to illuminate the car park). The height of the lights in the car park are the same as street lights. He asked why there are tall lights away from the main lodging areas?

Mr Hodkinson of 5 Brick Row said that he and his partner love the darkness of the village. There was an incident at the school one year ago and extra lighting might have helped that situation. They agreed that children need to be safe at all times and employers have a responsibility to their staff and children. They did not agree with the lighting all around the perimeter of the site. They expressed an interest in finding out more about the school. CS will speak to them about the next school open day.

Della Young had previously been involved in a new building development of 450 houses and there were not 77 lights on site. She felt the number of lights required here was excessive.

CLlr Smith asked if an artists impressions could be drawn of the development to help imagine what it will look like. CS did not think this would help and a practical demonstration was held for neighbours last Summer. Mr Carter asked what would happen if the planning was refused. The school would revert to using the current system on sensor.

Finally, Mark Williams of Swalcliffe Park School advised that they school want a resolution just like the village. They have gone through a long process and the school will comply with the decision made by CDC. The school cannot change the existing lighting system until a new plan is in place.

The Chair thanked Mark Williams for attending the meeting. He left the room.

Action: Councillors to consider all the information given tonight and let the Parish Clerk know via email of their decision.

16/00015/TCA, Fell 1 Red Chestnut at Forge House, 5 Old Forge Road. Councillors had no objections.

4. To approve the minutes of the previous council meeting held on 5th and 12th January 2016

The minutes of 5th January 2016 were approved and signed. The signing of the minutes of 12th January would be carried over to the next meeting.

5. Open Forum

Gay Harris of the Parochial Church Council noted that work to the toilet and kitchen in the church is now finished. The official opening is on Sunday 21st February and there will be drinks and nibbles. Leaks in the roof have been repaired but the beetle problem is ongoing.

Mr Foley asked if a representative of the Parish Council could join the Management Group for the Woodland Play Area. Mr Foley agreed to let the Parish Council know when their next meeting is. It is hoped the group can report back to the Parish Council at their April meeting.

Prior to this they will send the information to the Parish Clerk via email. The Village Fund group have committed some money to the project which will form part of the financial package.

6. To appoint a Vice-Chair

Cllr Bell agreed to be Vice-Chair.

7. To look at Councillor Responsibilities

The Chair had produced a new list of responsibilities. The full list will be circulated and Councillors to decide which area they wish to look after.

8. Matters Arising (for information only)

OCC Highways – The Parish Clerk to chase the grass cutting maps from Tim Shickle and answers to the outstanding questions raised at the January meeting.

Broken Salt bin – This was fixed by Cllr Smith. Thanks was given to him.

Garage - An advert to sell a double garage was placed in the Link by Mrs Irons. She has since advised there has been a good response. There is six weeks left to sort this sale out.

Assets of Community Value – The Parish Clerk has tried to contact the pub and left a message. It was suggested she emailed them.

Fourth dog bin – This was installed outside the school. CDC have been notified that the fourth bin has been installed.

9. To look at Standing Orders

These were adopted last year. Councillors to remind themselves of the content.

10. To receive an update on the Parish Plan

A comprehensive report was written and circulated by Peter Beddowes and he asked for comments from Councillors. Feedback this evening will be tabled into a second draft and put on the village website. The group will then come back to the Parish Council with comments to be formally agreed.

The group see the plan as a signpost to what people are looking for in the future. There are a lot of decisions to be made which are outside of village control. There was an 86% response rate from the survey. 96% of people are happy to live here in a rural landscape, with a sense of community and good public services. Pressing issues are 1. Digital connectivity which affects everyone 2. Speed of traffic. With regard to longer term developments 50% said not to change anything, 30% would like to see a modest development. If you do not move with the times, the village will stagnate. People said they liked the dark skies.

A vision for the future was created:

'To protect what we value whilst adapting to the changing expectations of our evolving community'.

The village is evolving and changing. It is not a pensioner park. There are 39 children and it is a nicely balanced, diverse village. People lead very busy lives and do not look to the village for every aspect of their life. They are realistic as to what can be done.

The recommendations are as follows:

- Support the adoption of new amenities in the form of a defibrillator; dog waste bins.
- Supports the work of the play area working group in aiming to create a children's woodland/ natural play area (that can be used by families too) and ideally suggests that the proposed footpath to the play area could also be extended, as part of this project, to link Park Lane with the rest of the village.

- Organised the setting up of a number of new social clubs/groups; so far – a Film, Book, Bridge, Walking, and Art Club.
- Suggests that PC encourages/sponsors setting up a 'Digital Connectivity' action group, if volunteers (ideally with a mix of technical, business and personal motivations) can be found, to support the work of the PC in pursuing better broadband and mobile phone reception
- Suggests that similarly the PC creates a 'Roads and Footpaths' working group to consider the options we have regarding traffic speeding, parking, pavements etc. We also suggest that this Group could organise regular litter collecting to build on the efforts of the ad-hoc group.
- Has already set up a working group to provide newcomers and visitors to the village with useful information to be published on the village website in due course (contacts, history, walks etc.). (The group is -Jenny, Peter, Cathy, Michelle, David)
- Believes that whilst the PC and others should do all in their power to preserve the essence of the village as it is, it should also have an open mind to suitable small-scale development (paying attention to architectural and environmental considerations) if it helps the village to thrive in the future or provides some affordable housing for first-time buyers.

The Chair thanked Peter and the group for all their work.

11. To discuss the drainage problems behind Brick Row and the responses received from residents

Letters were sent to all seven properties in Brick Row. Replies have been received from all but numbers 1 and 7. The residents of no 5 Brick Row noted that water is running off the field now but there has been no rain for days. Water runs off in four to five places. OCC Highways are currently working in Park Lane fixing a culvert underground near Home Farm. Cllr Benson did walk around with Highways last year and they have no money to rectify any drainage problems. As Duncan Jack's family once owned Brick Row, he may be able to clarify where the culvert should be. From the floor, Mr Foley as a property owner in Park Lane noted that the state of Park Lane is disgraceful. It is not a Park Lane problem but whose problem is it.

Action: It was agreed that the Parish Clerk write to Duncan Jack to try and find out the original state of the land. The Parish Clerk to write to OCC Highways for their advice.

12. To agree access and garage rental charges for 2016

It was proposed that a single garage rental would increase for 2016 by £10 to £160.00 and a double garage would increase by £20.00 to £230.00 for 2016. Councillors agreed to accept these new charges.

Action: The Parish Clerk to send out the lease.

13. To receive an update on the defibrillator

Another option to consider is to purchase a defibrillator from Community Heartbeat. It can be placed in the phone box. The Parish Council can adopt the kiosk for £1. BT will pay for the electricity for 7 years and supply an emergency telephone. The purchase price is more expensive as Community Heartbeat offer more of a managed service. Other villages have been successful in getting a grant.

Action: The Parish Clerk to get more information.

14. To discuss the village hall electrical quotes and agree who will do the work (circulated)

Three quotes were received which varied in price from £852.00 to £1983.00. It was agreed to accept the quote from Angel Electrical Services in Bloxham who were recommended at a cost of £852.00 including VAT. The Parish Council agreed to pay for this work.

15. Finance Report

Bank balances are as follows:

Current account £ 7,717.00

Deposit account £17,012.00

Betty Panks Account £4,316.12

To approve a third cheque signatory

Cllr V Taylor agreed to be a third cheque signatory to replace Mr Foley. The Parish Clerk to get the new forms from Lloyds Bank.

The following payments were approved:

£210.00 to Swalcliffe Village Hall (hire of hall)

£100.00 to Swalcliffe Village hall (grant towards new projector)

£15.00 to Swalcliffe Village Hall (use of hall for CDC conservation meeting)

£520.90 to Red Moon Concepts (cutlery and crockery for village hall)

16. Correspondence

The following correspondence had been received and sent out:

From:

CDC, Consultations, Partial Review of the Cherwell Local Plan (Part 1): Oxfords unmet housing needs – Issues Paper, Cherwell Local Plan 2011-2031 (Part 2): Development Management Policies and Sites – Issues Paper’ Draft Statement of Community Involvement

To

Mrs Irons, garage

17. Councillors’ Reports

A discussion took place about the Queens 90th birthday celebrations. Beacons are being lit around the country. The local one at Jesters is being lit at 10.15pm on the Queens actual birthday on 21st April. The Parish Clerk has asked CDC if there will be grants but they do not know yet. CDC have confirmed that road closures will have to be paid for. The Parish Clerk to scan and email the letter to Gay Harris. Cllr’s suggested that the village fund are asked if they want to put on an event and the Parish Council to offer a financial contribution. The Parish Clerk to contact David McLlindon, Chair of the Village Fund.

Cllr Taylor noted that Speedwatch should be starting again as the clocks are changing.

Cllr Taylor reported a section of concrete by the village hall which is broken. The VHC are looking into it.

The residents of No 5 Brick Row have raised other issues in their letter which will be covered at the next meeting.

The Parish Clerk was asked to chase the broken weight limit sign on Green Lane by the Main Road.

Meeting Closed 9.15pm