

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

held on 10th February 2021 via Zoom.

Present:

Cllr Kelly in the Chair

Cllr Offer, Cllr. L Mann, Cllr Tierney, Cllr Willard, CBC Councillor Alison Graham.

Apologies: Cllr McGrory and Cllr Kevan

11/21 Public Participation:

A Resident has contacted the PC regarding the footpath between Newbury lane and the A6 being reinstated, Cllr Graham was able to confirm that this will be completed by Highways once the Hayfield development is complete and the Footpath alongside has been installed.

A Resident put a complaint into the Police regarding the speed of vehicles travelling through the village and the number of HGVs. A case worker was appointed, and monitoring was set up in Newbury lane. The evidence was significant enough for the complaint to be upheld. The monitoring took place during February and included snow days, which would be quieter. 1000 vehicles larger than a box van travelled through the village and 7000 vehicles, a significant number of which were speeding.

The Resident was able to provide the PC with the Filton and Greenfield weight restriction order, there are restrictions on the CBC site, however they do not appear to include Silsoe. The Resident is seeking to make Ampthill Rd a prohibited road for vehicles over 7.5 tonnes. There have been 205 HGVs within a month and only 97 had legitimate business within the village. Some vehicles have no signage so are not easy to identify.

Cllr Kelly inquired as to who is eligible to have a copy of the data collected during the monitoring? He will contact Juliet Wright at Police Headquarters. He will also communicate with Highways to question why the orders listed do not include Silsoe?

12/21 Confirm the Minutes/ Matter Arising:

- The Minutes of the meeting held on 13th January 2021 were agreed.
- The deletion of the previous meeting recording was agreed.

13/21 Declaration of interest/ Request for dispensation:

- None.

14/21 Report by Central Bedfordshire Councillor:

- Cllr Graham will be attending a presentation regarding a new care home to the south of the village, along with Executive members. Care homes are in demand a recent graph for 2025 indicated that there is a current demand for 403 Residents and supply for only 250. Cllr Graham's personal view is that as the current CBC care homes are in Urban areas, a care home in a rural area might be practical for village Residents. Cllr Graham will advise that parties lease with the PC and she will report back to the PC after the presentation.
- Cllr Graham has been in discussion with Nick Carofalo, Chris Dorow and John Chandler at CBC regarding the Park Ave Footpath, clerk confirmed that letters have been sent to David Taylor at WPE and a response is being awaited.
- The Enforcement officer has extended the deadline at Ward Hedges/Silsoe Road, for the Resident to clean up the site, the Resident now has until end of March 21.
- An application for a large site on the A507, Beadlow Manor, has been renewed. It was withdrawn several years ago, after serious complications. Cllr Graham declined attending the presentation, thinking it would not be worthwhile, but it was up to the PC as to its response. Such applications should be regarded as extra to the Local Plan.
- Cllr Graham confirmed to Cllrs that further development identified within the local plan will go ahead.
- Cllr Graham is still pushing for double yellow lines in Park Ave, opposite The Rowans and beside the Beeches.
- The licence for "Cakes and Canapes" was issued in error by CBC and was rescinded within 24 hours.

15/21 Finances:

Cllr Kevan emailed his latest Financial Report which included.

- Current Account = £34,246.51
- Deposit Account = £200,935.55
- National wide = 81,257.39

Outgoing payments for January 2021:

David Granger £180
Website/social media £150
Eon £55.68
Community Heartbeat £475.20
Expenses Clerk £862.89

Adjusting for the value of unapproved invoices included and expected to be paid, this leaves a total current PC cash balance of £314,831.78 (balance last meeting was £317,031.61). There is still one old uncleared approved payment of £60 relating to BATPC course fees.

The claim submitted by Clerk for expenses has taken us over the budgeted amount for these. I am completely happy with the details of the expenses – the issue is the cost of the Zoom meetings

subscription and renewing the annual Microsoft software licence and for the replacement laptop were not anticipated when we set the budget. The allocating of £200 more to the budget for these expenses was approved.

The PC received an invoice for the defibrillator maintenance contract. The PC budgeted £292 plus £104 remaining from donations received – a total of £396. The actual cost of the contract being £475. Following investigations by the Clerk, she confirmed a proposal that the PC renew the maintenance contract but to work directly with the Community Heartbeat Trust. The PC has a responsibility to ensure value for money, and by taking this additional action the PC would also ensure continuity of service. This was agreed and £79 was added to the budget for these expenses.

There are currently reserved balances of:

£15,000	General reserve
£521	Allotment deposits (this needs to be rechecked with the allotments club)
£110,345	Sports Centre
£95,005	Miller Homes Play Areas
£187	Village Hall

There remains in the current year's forecast a total of £15,000 for funding new lighting schemes and traffic calming. I would also remind Councillors that £6,095 remains for SPC funding towards works on the "Cage" where we hope to get external funding for most of the work needed.

Based on this precept and budget for 21/22 approved at the last meeting, this leaves available to the Parish Council funding of £39,732 (last month this was £40,011) for future projects (e.g., Park Avenue footpath, Play Area improvements, traffic calming measures) to the end of the next financial year. This is different to the figure last reported due to the points above on expenses and defibrillator costs.

Several copies of the Silsoe History book have been sold and a Resident who covers the administration has requested whether the proceeds can be donated to groups within the village as and when the money is collected. The PC have recovered the original outlay and therefore agree for the proceeds to be donated at the discretion of the Resident; the PC seek to be kept informed of the donations.

Finally, the PC received a copy of the Financial Accounts for Silsoe News for 2020. They were pleased to report that despite a drop in advertising revenue of over £600 from the previous year (mainly due to a 2-month shutdown for advertising when, for COVID related reasons, a scaled down publication was produced to provide uninterrupted monthly village news and information), this was offset by an increase in space rates (the first in 4 years) plus a very generous level of donations of £750 from local groups and an ex-Resident. A small surplus was therefore reported for 2020, and hence the PC received no funding support request in 2020 (SPC contributed £250 in 2019). However, for 2021 the uncertainty on costs, not least due to increasing print numbers, means the Silsoe News team do ask us to budget for possible support, which we have done. The PC acknowledge their appreciation of the efforts of the Silsoe News Team, particularly with their management of difficulties caused by COVID, clerk will write to them.

All payments agreed, Clerk will set up online payments to be authorised by Cllr Kevan.

16/21 Planning:

Due to there being only one application this month there was no Planning meeting.

- CB/TCA/21/00054 Works to Park Avenue trees. Cllr Tierney contacted WPE regarding these trees as they were highlighted in the tree report. No objections.
- CB/TRE/21/00021 Silsoe Orchard rear. No objections.
- CB/TCA/21/00039 The Old Vicarage. No objections.
- CB/21/00105/FULL 14A The High St, no objections.
- CB/21/00277/ADV 4 The Gateway. Cllrs were concerned on the brightness of the sign and the impact on Residents in proximity. PC will agree to submit comments.

Affordable homes: It was agreed that the PC would leave this issue for now but would make CBC fully aware that they will be monitoring further applications to ensure correct procedures are followed.

Whitebeam Close: Still awaiting confirmation of responsibility for drains and drainage ditch on the northern boundary.

Bloor Homes:

- First Port have taken over Chamonix and Mainstay. The PC are still proceeding with discussions regarding the adoption of the site, Bloor are intending to discuss the situation with First Port prior to making any decisions. The PC will be arranging a meeting asap.
- Mander Farm Road fencing has been confirmed as Miller Homes Ltd responsibility.
- Invoice for the Plantation View Play area Covid-19 signs has been passed for payment, Cllr Kelly will chase this.

17/21 Projects:

Park Avenue Footpath: Update provided by Cllr Graham, awaiting a response from WPE.

Website:

Following the meeting with Aurora Cllr Willard has revised the site map and outlined what should appear on each page. This will be agreed by next week and then he will be requesting information on content from Councillors.

Defibrillators:

The PC will pay maintenance invoice for the defibrillators consummables and will monitor the defibrillators within the village.

The Cage:

Still awaiting information and proposal from Green Sand Trust.

18/21 Consultations and correspondence:

- Information on fly tipping, has been posted on social media and the website.
- Eon, requesting a smart meter be fitted, Clerk will find out more.
- Volunteers required at Priory House for assisting the vaccinations.
- Anglian water complaint being chased by Cllr Kelly.

- Cllr Kelly and Clerk attended a meeting with David Granger to agree the grass cutting schedule for next season and look at ways to keep within the budget, details emailed to Cllrs.

19/21 AOB:

- The CBC claim that the additional litter bin by the Co-op has now been fitted. Cllr Kelly to investigate.
- The insulated dumpsters for the bottle bank have now been ordered and will be available in approximately 8 weeks.
- Litter Bins in the village are overflowing, Cllr Mann will check if they are emptied tomorrow, if not Clerk will report them.
- Residents in the village are litter picking, which is exceedingly kind of them, however, there have been a complaint about black bags containing litter being left next to the litter bins. It was confirmed that this was normal practise but in view of the Residents complaint It was suggested they could be left by the bin at the bus stop. Cllr Kelly will contact CBC and the litter pickers to discuss this.
- The Annual Parish meeting will be held via Zoom this year, all Cllrs reports will be available online prior to the meeting and the Annual meeting will be held like an open meeting for Residents to come along once again and ask questions, generally or specifically referring to the reports. This is scheduled for 14th April 2021.
- Annual meeting will be held this year on Thursday 6th May 2021.
- Chris Dorow at CBC had confirmed that he was investigating maps for the website.

Publicity items:

- A post asking all Residents to please look after the trees within the village.
- Request asking Residents to cut back private hedges that are encroaching paths, Clerk will write to some Residents.
- Fly tipping information.

20/21 Date of next meeting:

The next planning meeting will be Monday 8th March 2021 via Zoom.

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 10th March 2021 via Zoom.