

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

held on 8th February 2023 at the Silsoe village hall.

Present:

Cllr Kelly in the Chair

Cllr Kevan, Cllr Willard, Central Bedfordshire Councillor Alison Graham.

Cllr Mann, Cllr Offer via Zoom

12/23 Apologies and Declaration of interest/ Request for dispensation:

Apologies: Cllr Gearey.

13/23 Confirm the Minutes/ Matter Arising:

The Minutes of the meetings held on 11th January 2023 were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

14/23 Public participation:

None

15/23 Police representative:

PC Mountforth will attend the March meeting.

16/23 Report by Ward Councillor:

- CBC announced last week that the scheduled works to the Clophill roundabout have been significantly reduced, including the decision that the footbridge should be retained. Silsoe Cllrs have emailed Cllr Delgarno but have not received any response so far? Cllr Degarno was in a meeting with Paul Mason on 8th February to discuss the proposed works so should now be able to respond.
- Stevenage Leisure have lost the contract with CBC and the tender has been granted to a new company. The contract with Silsoe sports centre does not expire until March 2024, a meeting will be held in Silsoe tomorrow to discuss memberships and the effect on the business.
- HGV restrictions in villages has been delayed until July 2023, local Government still do not have the authority.
- £2 bus tickets are now available for travel across Central Beds and will be until end of March 2023, this has been subsidised by CBC.

Further to the discussion on the Clophill roundabout, Cllr Offer expressed his concerns over such a significant amount of money being spent on the reduced project. Cllr Graham confirmed that the money has been allocated by Central Government for an allocated project and cannot be moved elsewhere. SPC Cllrs expressed their concerns that they have engaged heavily with the design of the project and were told that the project would not be commenced until after summer 2023, SPC questioned whether it would be started prior to this in order to receive the allocated funding? SPC then received an update that works will commence in 2 weeks? This 2 weeks allows no opportunity to engage or discuss the works with CBC. Cllrs agreed they would need to communicate this to residents. (Clerk will arrange posts on FB and website, Cllr Kelly noticeboards and Silsoe news)

17/23 Finances:

Approved payments and invoices due for payment in the current year so far total £76,586 (balance in Dec was £68,572). This does include the latest invoices. The major expenditures over the last 2 months are with Grangers £2,889.60 (mainly tree works), clerk costs £2,726.42 (includes back-dated pay adjustment and allowances), and CPM playgrounds £1,536.

Since the Dec meeting a further £756 for allotment rents has been banked, making the total received £1,644 – we need to confirm if this includes any club membership fees which need to be passed on? Cllr Offer confirms there should be 59 members and therefore £345 will need to be transferred. The cheque (102162) raised back in March/April 2022 for £355 for last year's membership fees has not been cleared, Cllr Offer will discuss this with the committee and ask for the cheque to be returned and a new one can be provided for both years.

The bank account balances as of Feb 6th are:

Current a/c	£53,792.69	was £64,862.79.
Deposit a/c	£201,149.77	was £201,149.77.
Nationwide	£81,698.78	was £81,698.78.

Adjusting for the value of unapproved invoices included and expected to be paid, this leaves a total current PC cash balance of £332,966.44 (balance in the Dec meeting was £341,012.69).

There are currently reserved balances of:

£15,000	General reserve
£1,234	Allotment deposits
£103,994	Sports Centre
£92,092	Miller Homes Play Areas
£187	Village Hall

The funding available for new projects to end of March 2024 is £41,184.

OUTING GOING PAYMENTS FOR FEBRUARY:

£2644.80 David Granger

£162 Website

£35.41 Power

£27.00 Village Hall hire

£145 Drain heroes (installation of new tap in the sports centre)

£486 Community heartbeat (defibrillator maintenance)

£345 Allotment members payment.

Payments agreed, Clerk will arrange bank transfers.

Balances:

18/23 Planning:

The PC considered the following applications:

- CB/22/04696/FULL 36A Ampthill Rd, original comments by the PC still stand, Cllrs are concerned however, this application has been amended several times and each time it gets progressively bigger, Cllrs are concerned that it is becoming an over development of the site and inappropriate.
- CB/22/04964/FULL 4 Forest path, no objections.
- CB/23/00008/FULL 4 Fielden Court, Cllrs are yet to view the plot, any comments will be agreed via email.

19/23 Projects:

1. BLOOR HOMES:

Cllr Kelly met with the Cricket club on Monday outlining the options open to them, they are concerned that they will have to secure the rights to play with Bloor and discuss the associated conditions of the use. The PC have renewed the insurance on the mower.

There are concerns over drainage with the Community woodland, PC are awaiting further details from Bloor. David Swain is seeking legal advice, The PC urged this to be in the next month, to ensure progress is being made.

Cllr Graham has received an email from Lorna Curver at CBC outlining CBC had no intention to take on the Woodland, PC has accepted this area subject to conditions. CBC confirmed that there is a covenant in the deeds for the properties within the Bloor development, indicating that a maintenance company are responsible for the

upkeep, meaning the PC cannot take over the land? Cllrs disagreed, the original S106 specified that the PC should be able to take on the land.

2. VEHICLE OPERATED TRAFFIC SIGNS:

The 2 SIDs were due to be installed in January 2023, there has been a delay, clerk needs to receive an invoice in order to submit the funding application by end of March 2023.

3. MILLER HOMES:

A committee has been formed and they are arranging a meeting with First point to discuss maintenance charges.

4. HYBRID MEETINGS:

Cllr Kelly, Cllr Offer and Cllr Mann and clerk joined a Shefford TC full meeting to try their equipment, the sound was far superior to what the PC have been experiencing. The PC will now research the most suitable conference equipment to enable hybrid meetings to be successful.

5. Emergency plan:

Clerk has met with a resident to work on the Emergency plan for the village, the draft will be circulated next week, it was agreed it would be considered by all Cllrs. It was agreed the only equipment required would be high-viz jackets and the PC doe already have those.

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20/23 Consultations and correspondence:

- BLMK Digital survey
- PCC survey from last month has been completed.
- Resident has contacted Clerk to discuss the lack of lighting on Ampthill Rd, Cllrs reiterated that the lighting meets the requirements set by CBC.

- A resident has expressed concerns that there is a lack of footpath from Mander Farm Rd to the Co-op. The PC have discussed this previously but the land is owned by Bloor Homes.
- Flitwick TC are looking to discuss having a banking hub in the town due to Barclays closing, the PC are invited to attend a meeting on 20th February to discuss this. Unfortunately, no Cllrs are available.
- East Anglian Air Ambulance have asked to set up a refreshments area at the Community sports centre to provide drinks to their walkers, the sponsored walk will run through the village on 29th April 2023
- A card from His Majesty, the King, thanking the PC for expressing their condolences following the death of his mother.

21/23 AOB:

- There is a light that has been damaged by The George, Clerk will contact the contractor.
- It was agreed the PC need to recruit new Cllrs; Cllr Kelly will write an article for the Silsoe News.
- The PC have been invited to the July Fayre in the village.
- It was agreed that in order for there to be arrangements made for the Coronation weekend, a committee will need to be formed, Clerk will put a post out on FB to see if anyone would like to join the committee and assist with arrangements.

22/23 Date of next meeting:

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 8th March 2023

Signed

Date