

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

held on Wednesday 7th February 2024 at the Silsoe village hall.

Present:

Cllr Kelly in the Chair

Cllr Offer, Cllr Willard, Cllr Appleman, Central Bedfordshire Councillor Anna French, Central Bedfordshire Councillor Liz Childs.

Clerk via Zoom

144/24 Apologies and Declaration of interest/ Request for dispensation

Cllr Gearey, Cllr Kevan, Cllr Mann.

145/24 Confirm the Minutes/ Matter Arising:

The Minutes of the meetings held on 10th January 2024 were agreed.

146/24 Public participation:

None

147/24 Police representative:

None

148/24 Report by Ward Councillors:

- Ward Cllrs have a meeting with Highways and Cllr Willard on 8th February, Cllr French outlined the area of concern on a map, further discussion under Traffic/Highways 151/24.
- Cllr Childs is still following up the issue with the positioning of a fence in Newbury Lane.
- The mobile fish and chip shop does have a licence to sell.
- Cllr French will contact the resident arranging the wildflowers in the village.
- Clerk asked if there was any update regarding the Ward Cllr funding for the defibrillator?

149/24 Finances:

Approved payments and invoices due for payment in the current year so far total £91,001 (Jan meeting this was £86,954). This does include the cost of the replacement defibrillator and one grass cut of the play areas and football pitches.

SILSOE PARISH COUNCIL

Since the last meeting a further £12.00 has been received for allotment rents, making the total so far £1,500.30.

The bank account balances as of Feb 5th are:

Current a/c	£49,387.53	was £54,978.64
Deposit a/c	£203,064.74	was £202,360.08
Nationwide	£83,051.51	was £83,051.51

Adjusting for the value of unapproved invoices included and expected to be paid, this leaves a total current PC cash balance of £326,915.98 (balance last month was £331,472.05). Apart from the payments proposed in this meeting, the speed signs payment for £7,901.40 which was received back in April has still not been resolved. The PC have tried to pay this, but to date the Barclays bank portal will not process the payment. Clerk has sent CBC a cheque.

There are currently reserved balances of:

£25,000	General reserve	was £25,000
£1,234	Allotment deposits	was £1,234
£85,279	Sports Centre	was £85,279
£89,524	Miller Homes Play Areas	was £89,691
£187	Village Hall	was £187

Based on our budget for 2024/25, this means there is £46,358 (balance last month was £46,358) currently available for new projects between now and March 2025.

Recent expenditure shows the PC have overspent by £220. Cllrs approved for the training budget to be increased by £220, with a corresponding reduction in this year's insurance budget. This will then leave the funding available for new projects unchanged.

Payments for February 2024:

Website:	£162
D Granger	£1,333.20
N Power	£69.24
Village Hall Hire	£27.00.
Community Heartbeat (new defibrillator)	£1,296.00
Community Heartbeat annual support	£486.00
Lawnmower insurance Gallagher	£147.21
BATPC Courses	£140, £103 & £103

Payments proposed by Cllr Appleman, seconded by Cllr Willard, all agreed, Clerk will set up payments.

Barclays have asked the PC to confirm mandate details again, Clerk has submitted details twice now but will contact Barclays to discuss further.

Rotary donated crocus bulbs to the allotments which have now been planted, clerk will contact the grass cutting contractor for a date of the next cut so that the area can be avoided.

The quote for the lawnmower repairs has been received and is £2,820.77, Cllr Kelly proposed the works are carried out, seconded by Cllr Willard, all Cllrs agreed.

The Beacon repair costs total £1,740.00, Cllr Kelly proposed the works, seconded by Cllr Offer. Clerk will arrange a FB post to find an LPG gas fitter to assist.

A quote for £2,600 for new allotment gates has been received, it was also suggested that posts may suffice. There is some S106 money available that could be used for this project.

The defibrillator has been received and is in place, signs are available to put on the noticeboards, village hall and co-op.

150/24 Planning:

- CB/TCA/24/00045 Land west of Coachman's cottage, wrest Park. 5 Populus Nigra to be felled and removed. No objection.
- CB/TRE/24/00022 6 The Maples, 4 Multi-stemmed sycamores to be coppiced, 1 x Oak tree thinned by 20%. No objection.
- CB/24/00135/FULL 24 High St, conversion of retail premises to residential dwelling. Resubmit previous PC comments.
- CB/24/00095/FULL 50 High St. Demolition of workshop, erection of garden room. No objections.
- CB/24/00107/FULL The Stables, Lower Gravenhurst. Conversion of stable building to a dwelling house. No objections.
- CB/TCA/24/00044 Wrest Park, Works to trees in a conservation area. No objections.

No further update and no response from planning re the Taymer application.

Greenwoods should have been decided by the end of January 2024, no update as yet.

151/24 Projects:

1. MILLER HOMES/FIRST POINT:

There has been lots of discussion on FB regarding charges, the contracts are between the resident and the contractor. Some streetlights are not working, these need to be reported to Bloor.

2. WREST PARK CHRISTMAS EVENT:

A meeting took place with English Heritage for 22nd January at wrest Park. EH have some concerns over how Kilimanjaro managed the event. It was the busiest light show in the East of England. The traffic management were too slow in manoeuvring and parking vehicles which led to a backlog of queuing vehicles in the village. EH will

now meet with Wrest Park enterprises to discuss the event. EH are currently looking at whether to hold the event again? EH have prepared a statement for residents, Cllrs agreed the statement.

3. TRAFFIC/HIGHWAYS:

Cllr Willard and the Ward Cllrs will attend a meeting with Highways to discuss the traffic issues within the village. There is lots of talk on FB regarding traffic, the PC would like to appeal for more residents to become involved, perhaps via a resident's group? A statement and update will be agreed for FB updating residents. It was also suggested that the PC provide a monthly update on the work of the PC to demonstrate what the PC deals with. The main concerns in the village are those associated with safety, particularly regarding pedestrians, the areas were highlighted on a map in preparation for the meeting. A resident has submitted a Freedom of Information request to CBC regarding the Clophill roundabout, it has been sent to the Highways team but actually showed by submitted to infrastructure.

4. COMMUNITY SPORTS CENTRE:

Trustees have engaged with Stevenage Leisure and are going through the process of retendering. The cleanliness will be addressed.

5. D Day:

The repairs to the beacon have been agreed.

6. MEETING DATES:

Alternative dates were agreed for July and October, Full council will meet on Monday 1st July and Monday 7th October 2024.

7. METAL DETECTING:

A resident has contacted the PC to request a suitable area for metal detecting. Cllrs discussed this request but unfortunately due to the potential damage to the area not area would be suitable.

8. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Deferred until next meeting.

9. ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Clerk has had a really good response from groups that have been invited, all groups on the back of the Silsoe news have been invited, clerk has asked groups to confirm attendance by end of February. Cllr Kelly has booked the Community sports centre for 10th April 7pm.

10. S106 MONEY

S106 money is available for projects within the village, the money for the Northern play area can be released in stages due to difficulties with contractors.

11. CODE OF CONDUCT:

The draft Code of conduct will be sent to Cllrs ahead of the next meeting and the training session arranged for 20th March 2024, the training will be £150.

152/24 Consultations and correspondence:

The following correspondence was received:

- CBC Biodiversity initiatives.
- CBC Path accessibility fund.
- CBC Local Plan workshop, Peter to attend.
- Bedfordshire Hospital NHS Charity, guide to fundraising.
-

153/24 AOB:

154/24 Date of next meeting:

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 13th March 2024

Signed

Date