**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting**

**held on Monday 6th January 2025 at the Silsoe village hall.**

**Present:**

**Cllr Kelly in the Chair**

Cllr Kevan Cllr Gearey, Cllr Royer, Cllr Virgo.

Via Zoom, Cllr Willard, Cllr Appleman, Cllr McGrory, Cllr Mann.

**01/25 Apologies and Declaration of interest/ Request for dispensation**

Apologies Cllr Offer.

**02/25 Confirm the Minutes/ Matter Arising**:

The Minutes of the meetings held on 2nd December 2024 were agreed.

**03/25** **Public participation:**

A 12-year-old boy has contacted the PC regarding things for young people to do in the village, he came along to discuss his idea of a bike trail with Cllrs. Cllrs agreed it was a good suggestion and discussed an area of land near the Community woodland, Clerk will look into insurance and costs and the resident will come provide some ideas of what it could look like and research if other young people would be interested?

**04/25 Report by Ward Councillors:**

No report.

**05/25 Finances:**

January payments:

D Granger £6,453.80.

Website/Domain £162

Village hall hire £30.

N Power £90.57

Anglian water £31.83 & £18.30

CPM £4,461.60

Lawnmower insurance £151.24

Andy Muskett £113.40

I Kelly wreath £55

Payments proposed by Cllr Kevan, seconded by Cllr Gearey, all agreed.

Andy Muskett has provided a quote for lighting maintenance contract for the next 3 years, until end of March 2028, total cost £378+vat, proposed by Cllr Kevan, seconded by Cllr Royer, all agreed.

Approved payments and invoices due for payment in the current year so far total £76,454 (last meeting this was £63,728). The main costs over the last month have been grass cutting/hedge and tree maintenance (£7,353 excluding VAT) and the play area repairs (£3,718 excluding VAT). The income over the last month was £30.50 for allotment rents (bringing the total received to £1,656) and £4,841.64 for the VAT reclaim submitted at the end of November.

The bank account balances as of January 1st are:

Current a/c           £44,389.08        was £50,456.22

Deposit a/c         £206,119.46        was £206,119.46

Nationwide           £85,965.94        was £85,965.94

Adjusting for the value of unapproved invoices included and expected to be paid, this leaves a total current PC cash balance of £328,874.24 (balance last meeting was £338,822.82). There are no old un-cleared payments.

There are currently reserved balances of:

                £25,000                 General reserve                           was £25,000

                £1,772                   Allotment deposits                      was £1,772

                £83,999                 Sports Centre                               was £83,999

                £82,137                 Miller Homes Play Areas            was £85,359

                £187                       Village Hall                                   was £187

                £6,500                   Village Orchard                            was £7,500

This forecast for the end of the current year has £50,791  of unallocated funds available for new projects (last month £50,791), but as discussed previously (with particular reference to the future budgets observations) it is already expected that a significant portion of this will be needed in future years to cover potential costs related to the adoption of portions of the Bloor Development.

**06/25 Planning:**

* CB/TRE/24/00588 **:** 7 The Maples, Silsoe, Bedford, MK45 4DL. Works to trees protected by a Tree Preservation Order: No objection.
* CB/TPO/81/00004/W1 (T1 &T2) Hornbeam trees & (T3) Sweet. Chestnut tree, reduce lateral spread by 2.5 to 3m. No objection.
* Tree Preservation Order 42/2024 Thrift wood, Silsoe. No objection.

**07/25 Projects:**

1. **ORCHARD:**

Cllr Gearey is in discussion with the Edible Orchard group and at the very early stages of planning.

1. **NO WAITING RESTRICTIONS, CHESTNUT AVE AND OBELISK WAY:**

Cllr queried what actions CBC are taking to prevent parking becoming an issue elsewhere and to prevent people parking in the sports centre car park? Parents are parking in Plantation way and in the sports centre car park during drop offs and pick ups. When it first opened the school had staggered start and finish times to prevent a parking issue, Cllr Kevan asked if this has now changed? Cllrs also queried the Safe Walk to school plan. It was agreed that the PC would approach the school and discuss the parking issues and start times, Cllr McGrory would meet with the school if possible.

1. **DINITY POLICY:**

Clerk emailed a Dinity policy to Cllrs prior to the meeting, Cllr Gearey proposed the PC adopt the policy, seconded by Cllr Virgo, all agreed.

1. **CIVILITY AND RESPECT PLEDGE:**

Cllrs agreed to take the Civility and Respect pledge in line with SLCC, clerk will arrange this. Proposed by Cllr Royer, seconded by Cllr Gearey, all agreed.

1. **ANNUAL PARISH MEETING:**

Cllrs agreed that last year’s Annual parish meeting was a success, and they would like to repeat it again this year, a provisional date of 3oth April was agreed, Cllr Kelly will look to book the sports hall again. Clerk will send out the invitations as soon as the hall is confirmed.

1. **WOODLAND CONSULTATION:**

There will be an information event for residents on 13th January in the sports centre café. Clerk will send out information via FB. Cllrs were encouraged to attend if they could.

1. **PROJECTS 2025**

Cllr Gearey suggested looking at some benches near the cricket green for spectators to sit on or walkers to take a rest. Cllrs will meet when a game is in play to look at the safety aspect and if there is an appropriate area?

Cllr Kelly has signed the Bloor documents; they were signed on 19th December 2025. Cllr Kelly is looking at an assessment of the play area to ensure it has been fitted safely.

CBC have agreed the first S106 payment for the MUGA, a cheque should be received shortly.

The High St play area is under budget for the S106 funding, Cllr Kelly is looking at an additional piece of equipment and awaiting a quote from Wickstead.

**08/25 Consultations and correspondence:**

The following correspondence was received:

* Vehicle tax notification for the lawnmower.
* N Power change of price notifications.
* Safer Central survey
* Local Plan call for sites.
* VE Day 80, 8th May 2025, clerk will include on the next agenda.
* Hospital Charity Christmas card.
* Children and Young People’s Consultation.
* BATPC Data compliance training.
* School admissions Consultation.
* S106 Topic session 22nd January
* 9th February Woodland Planting event.
* Barclays confirmation of mandate changes, it was agreed Clerk would add Cllr Virgo to the mandate.
* Maulden PC Christmas tree information, Cllr Gearey will make contact.

**09/25 AOB:**

* Cllr Kelly asked if there was any information available following the traffic count? Cllr Willard confirmed that Cllr French will be discussing it with CBC.
* There was a question as to whether there is underfloor heating at the sports centre? It is being repaired.
* Ampthill Rd hedges are yet to be cut back and there is an increase in potholes, they need to be reported to CBC via Fix my street.
* There is a damaged fence in Chestnut Ave, which is owned by Bloor, Cllr Gearey has reported it to Bloor.
* Cllr Gearey is assisting a resident with clarifying responsibility for a tree in Forest path.
* 5 streetlights on Mander Farm rd. are still not working, alongside 3 on Plantation view, Cllr Gearey will chase this up with Fix my street and failing that will ask the Ward Cllrs.
* Cllr Gearey will discuss a grass survey with Cllr Offer.
* Priority setting meeting for 2025 are 8th January 9th April 9th July and 8th October.
* Clerk will set up payments for the Advent window prizes.
* There appears to be paving slabs on the grass at the corner of Fir Tree Rd, Cllr Kelly will look at who maintains the grass.
* There was recently some joyriding on the football pitches at the sports centre, Cllr Kevan suggested a bollard to restrict access, Trustees will discuss it.
* The school would like use for the MUGA for play times, Clerk has checked the insurance, the children would be covered by the school insurance, but the PC would be liable for any accident that was a result of their equipment or surface. Cllrs were concerned for the wear and tear of the surface as its not designed for play and appropriate footwear should be worn.

**10/25 Date of next meeting:**

The next meeting will be on Monday 3rd February 2025

Signed Date