**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting**

**held on Monday 12th May 2025 at the Silsoe village hall.**

**Present:**

Cllr McGrory as Chair, Cllr Mann, Cllr Royer, Cllr Virgo, Cllr Gearey.**,** Central Bedfordshire Councillor Anna French.

Cllr Offer via Zoom

**42/25 ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR OF THE PARISH COUNCIL:**

Cllr McGrory Proposed Cllr Offer as Chair, seconded by Cllr Royer, all Cllrs agreed.

Cllr Virgo Proposed Cllr McGrory as Vice-Chair, seconded by Cllr Royer, all Cllr agreed.

**43/25 Acceptance of Office:**

All Cllrs completed and acceptance of Office.

**44/25 Apologies and Declaration of interest/ Request for dispensation**

Cllr Kevan, Cllr Willard, Central Bedfordshire Councillor Liz Childs.

**45/25 Confirm the Minutes/ Matter Arising**:

The Minutes of the meetings held on 8th April 2025 and the Annual Parish meeting on 8th April 2025 were agreed. Proposed by Cllr Mann, seconded by Cllr Virgo, all agreed.

**46/25 Public participation:**

None

**47/25 Report by Ward Councillors:**

Cllr French is chasing up Highways for the traffic report, there has been a change to staffing within the department, Kyle Stuart is now Head of Traffic management.

Ward Cllrs are encouraging residents and Cllrs to respond to the School Transport consultation CBC are holding.

Cllr Childs is arranging a petition for 20mph zone outside Ramsey Lower school, Cllr McGrory commented that Silsoe should have a 20mph zone outside the school but there are no signs, Cllr French will look into this.

**48/25 Finances:**

Due to the multiple S106 funding amounts now received against a number of specific areas within the Parish to cover future expenditure, there is now separate spending and the budget on each of these areas to enable us to track these against the relevant S106 funding. In particular this relates to grass cutting, tree maintenance and play areas where there are now S106 funding amounts for the Miller play areas, cricket pitch, Bloor play area, woodland area and orchard. You will see the current unspent and forecast year-end unspent balances against each of these funding amounts at the bottom of the report. On a small accounting point, I have put the expenditure on cutting the grass verges on the Bloor estate which are not actually our responsibility against the Bloor play area funding.

Approved payments and invoices due for payment in the current year so far total £13,558 (this is the first reported expenditure figure for the current financial year and excludes the VAT values which can be reclaimed). The main cost over the April has been the grass cutting (£11,048 plus VAT which totals £13,257).

The PC has also received the first 50% instalment of the precept for £40,476, and rental income for the cricket pitch of £150.

The bank account balances as of May 10th are:

Current a/c           £26,098.14        was £35,571.39.

Deposit a/c         £424,773.92        was £384,297.92.

Nationwide           £89,561.08        was £89,561.08

Adjusting for the value of unapproved invoices included and expected to be paid, this leaves a total current PC cash balance of £531,634.62 (balance last meeting was £506,914.29). There are no old un-cleared payments.

The precept was actually paid into the deposit account, which is why that balance has increased. This will only be moved as necessary to the current account when needed to cover payments, as it does earn interest in the deposit account.

There are currently reserved balances of:

                £2,022                   Allotment deposits                      was £2,022

                £33,575                 Bloor Play Area                            was £34,330

                £27,774                 Community Woodland               was £28,099

                £25,000                 General reserve                           was £25,000

                £81,657                 Miller Homes Play Areas            was £82,545

                £83,999                 Sports Centre                               was £83,999

                £187                       Village Hall                                   was £187

                £6,354                   Village Orchard                            was £6,620

                £112,896               Village Park                                  was £115,000

This forecast for the end of the current year has £50,793 of unallocated funds available for new projects (last month £50,643). This small increase is due to the unbudgeted cricket pitch rental income.

Payments for May 2025:

Website and Domain £162.00

D Granger £7,888.92

Silsoe village hall £30

CPM play area repair £48

R J Machinery £502.80

N Power £63.56

Kornelia Deppe £120.00

P Offer expenses £90.00

PD & Co payroll £67.20

CBC Precept £40,476.00

Cricket club pitch hire £150.00

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

The Internal audit is now complete, including the sample of transactions and checks on the website, the Internal auditor has made no recommendations. The audit report was presented at the meeting for Cllrs to read.

The Exercise of Public Rights dates were agreed as, 9th June – 18th July Clerk will advertise these.

S101 Local Government Act 1972 permits the Councillors to delegate the power of decision making to two members of the Council, usually the Clerk/responsible Finance Officer and one other. This will allow payments to be authorised and decisions to be made outside of a full Council meeting. Clerk will email all Councillors prior to any decisions being made. All councillors in agreement. Clerk and Cllr Willard will be delegated the power, proposed by Cllr Mann seconded by Cllr Gearey, supported by all other Councillors. This will be subject to Cllr Willard’s agreement.

Cllr Gearey proposed making a contribution of £80 to the Year 4 leavers party, seconded by Cllr McGrory, all agreed.

**49/25 Planning:**

* CB/25/01350/NMA Land adjacent to 7 Clophill Rd. No comments
* CB/25/01236/PAAD Fielden House, change of use from agricultural to dwelling. No comments

**50/25 Projects:**

1. **CRICKET:**

The first game was played last week, Cllr Offer has spoken to the club post-match to reiterate the need to remove all rubbish, bags next to the bin if its full is not appropriate due to animals getting the rubbish. Changing room are available if players wish to get changed before and after the game. Players should not be using the play equipment on the plantation view play area; this was intimidating for other users. Cllr Offer has drafted a hire agreement for the club.

Cllr Gearey is due to meet with the grounds person regarding the wicket to ensure it is of an appropriate standard prior to each game.

Cllrs agreed that a post on FB and the newsletter was required requesting that people do not use the wicket.

1. **ASB:**

Cllr Gearey had a meeting with the Inspector for Community Policing which was very successful. They discussed the ASB currently in the village as well as the history. She advised the PC to communicate with residents appealing for them to report crimes and forward any crime reference numbers to the PC. The more crime reports the police have the more time they can spend trying to address the problem. A resident has forwarded a photo and crime number to the PC, which was then forwarded to the Police, and they have been able to visit the culprit.

There is a new Police hub in Flitwick, Community enforcement and Rural crime Teams are based there.

There are two Community Engagement events planned for Silsoe, 17th may and 21st July, the Team are also willing to do additional pop-up events at Community gatherings.

An ASB meeting is planned for 20th June, with CBC officer Gary Newitt, Housing association representative, PCSOs, Ward Cllrs and the PC.

Cllr Gearey is also arranging a meeting with Co-op management to look at the possibility of setting up Shop Watch and to encourage them to report incidents.

1. **STREETLIGHTS:**

CBC are proposing a change of streetlights on the Miller and Bloor areas of the village, changing 70 decorative lanterns. The plan is on hold for the moment; the PC are awaiting further information on the proposal from CBC.

**50/25 Consultations and correspondence:**

The following correspondence was received:

* CBC Council forum, School Transport and Highways.
* Community and Partnership update
* Community Governance

**51/25 AOB:**

* Cllr Offer is unable to make the May or June meetings therefore an extraordinary meeting was agreed for 20th May 2025 for signing the audit.
* The June meeting will be 2nd June and July will either be 15th or 16th, to be confirmed with Cllrs not at the meeting. Moving forward it was agreed to review the date of meetings with potentially moving them to second Wednesday of the month.
* Cllr Gearey has a meeting planned with First Port to discuss outstanding maintenance works. David Swain is to confirm the areas within Bloor that First port are responsible for.
* Confirmation has been received from Bloor that they will fix the fencing on Cranfield and Barton Rd.
* Cllr Gearey is in communication with CBC regarding restrictions for dogs on the village park.
* It was agreed to explore fencing off or covering the wicket to protect it.
* Roles and responsibilities will be reviewed at the next meeting.
* A large branch is down on Ampthill Rd; Cllr Royer will look into this.

**52/25 Date of next meeting:**

The next meeting will be on Monday 2nd June 2025, interim meeting on 20th May 2025.

Signed Date