

**SWAFFHAM PRIOR ANNUAL VILLAGE ASSEMBLY
MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON WEDNESDAY, 28th May 2014 at 7.30PM**

Present: Parish Councillors: David Almond, John Covill (Chairman), Andrew Camps, Peter Hart, Paul Latchford and Geoffrey Woollard plus 14 members of the public.

Apologies: Cllr Allen Alderson, Steve Kent-Phillips, Eric Day, Sandra Gynn.

In Attendance: Karen King (Clerk)
CCC – Cllr David Brown
Jamie Wilding - Senior Development Manager, Hill Residential

Chairman John Covill welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Presentation by Hill Residential on Development at Lower End:

Jamie Wilding started the presentation by giving an overview of Hill Residential. Copies of details and plans of other similar development sites were available for those attending to see. JW then went on to summarise the detail of the proposed development at Lower End. He explained that the planning application for the development was due to go to ECDC Planning Committee in July and all being well it was hoped to start on site in October with the first people moving in to the properties Summer 2015.

Discussion followed:

JC asked where the Community Land Trust came into this? JW explained that 40% of the development would be affordable housing and the Community Land Trust would manage the allocation of this housing.

JW was asked why the houses were just in one area of the land available? JW replied that in the Local Plan this was the area allocated. GW summarised the Parish Council's involvement and agreement to 20 homes. Landowners also had a say on the allocated area.

It was suggested that the development area would be very cramped. JW explained that the site was just below one hectare with half the density of similar new developments.

AC asked at what stage the affordable housing would be built. JW said this area would be one of the earliest parts to be built.

At this point the Clerk suggested bringing forward the CLT agenda item. This was agreed and the Clerk read out a written report provided by Emma Fletcher (copies were available).

Report from Community Land Trust

The members of the Swaffham Prior Community Land Trust are delighted to confirm that the CLT was registered at Companies House on 23 December 2013. To date the cost of setting up the CLT has been met by a very generous grant from East Cambs District Council who now has a planning policy supporting the set up of Community Land Trusts. Since December the CLT have been working on a logo, our allocations policy and monitoring the planning application by Hill Residential. Under the terms of the CLT, the freehold of the land will remain in the CLT but a long lease of 125 years will be granted to Hundred Houses, who will cover the cost of building the homes and will be the ongoing management company.

The CLT will deal with the higher level decisions such as deciding on the allocation of the homes and also ensuring Hundred Houses keep the properties well maintained for the tenants. The SPCLT board currently comprises the following people:

A representative from the village Parish Council (the Parish Clerk)

A representative from Hundred Houses

A representative from the tenants of the houses (once they are occupied)

Four other members from the village

The allocation of one of the SWCLT's houses is that the applicant(s) must be able to meet one of the following Local Needs Housing Requirements (the "lettings policy"):

- a) Lived in the village for 6 out of the past 12 months; or
- b) A minimum of 3 years residence in the village within the 15 years preceding the application;
- c) Where one or both parents or guardians or children of an applicant have resided in the village for a minimum period of 2 years prior to the application; or
- d) Where the applicant has existing employment, or a verified offer of employment in the village for at least 15 hours per week.

The next steps are setting up a bank account and preparing the application forms. Subject to planning the houses should be ready for occupation in late 2015. Further information is available within the allocations policy. All feedback will be gratefully received.

Discussion:

PL asked who will set rent. DG said this would be set by the CLT but was not known as yet.

JC thanked Jamie Wilding and colleague for attending the meeting. They then left.

Presentation by Young People from the Village on Proposal for Scooter Park:

A group of young people from the village supported by Steve White presented to everyone their proposal for a single half-pipe ramp for scooters and circulated a picture showing what it would look like. They explained that they wanted somewhere to practice their scooter moves other than on pavements and showed to the meeting the type of scooters they used. They said they were very much aware of possible concerns people might have and this was the reason for their presentation and their wish to consult with the village. The suggested area for the ramp was between the Youth Club and the play area on the left hand side in parallel with the lane. They confirmed that there would be no groundwork required, the unit would be made of galvanised steel 10m long and 4m wide requiring minimum maintenance, installation and delivery would be free and the unit complied with European Standards. SW said he would forward to the Clerk the full specification details.

Discussion:

All agreed that the group should be commended for their hard work in putting together their proposal and stressed that although there were concerns about possible noise and security problems particularly at night, everyone felt this should be looked at further with an open mind. Steve White offered to take people to see a similar scooter park so they could better judge for themselves. GW asked about cost and whether fundraising ideas were in place. SW said they were. It was suggested that there might be alternative locations for this facility and this was discussed.

Approval of Minutes from Meeting – 23rd May 2013: The minutes were agreed by all as a correct record.

County Councillor's Annual Report: *(Cllr David Brown reported to the meeting).*

It was a huge honour to be re-elected as Conservative County Councillor for Burwell Division (covering Burwell, Reach, Swaffham Bulbeck and Swaffham Prior) at the elections on 2nd May 2013. Thank you to all who voted for me and gave me the opportunity to continue to represent you all. The overall County elections resulted in Cambridgeshire County Council becoming a Council with no overall control. The Conservative Party remains the single largest party on the Council with 32 of the 69 seats. One of the first acts of the new Council was to change from a Cabinet system of governance to a Committee system from the next Annual Meeting, the earliest timing the law allows. This change will take effect on 13 May 2014. One of those to lose their seat at the election was Nick Clarke, then Leader of the Council. Cllr Martin Curtis from Whittlesey was elected the new Leader of the Council. I had the honour of being appointed as Cabinet member for Children and Young People.

As a member of Cabinet, wrestling with the Business Plan for the next 4 years has taken up considerable time. Wrestling with the financial challenges of ever increasing demand and tightening budgets saw us proposing a Council Tax increase of 1.99%, whilst still delivering savings of £32 million in the coming year. Looking back over the year we have made good progress in a number of areas. We have secured funding for the A14 upgrade without the use of tolling; we are making good progress with delivering the Ely Southern Crossing and with the new Science Park station. We achieved a significant repayment from the contractors for the Guided Busway. We are also delivering new schools to meet the growing demands of living in the fastest growing County in the Country. We are also re-designing how we deliver services to make them more targeted as well as delivering the required savings and looking at new ways of generating income so we are less reliant on Central Government funding. Examples in these areas including the re-configuring of Children's Centres to reduce management; increasingly working with other Local Authorities through sharing services; work through the Troubled families Initiative; and exploring the possibility for the County Council to develop affordable housing on County Council land.

I have sat on a number of committees and groups during the year to help deliver these issues. These include: Constitution and Ethics Committee; Appointments and Remuneration Committee; the Local Safeguarding Children Board; Children's Trust; East of England Portfolio Holders for Children and Young People; North Ely Growth Working Party; Burwell Masterplan Working Party; the Local Government Association Rural Commission and Rural Policy Review Group; the Children in Care Council; Cambridgeshire Improvement Board; as well as Cabinet and Full Council.

I have also been approached for help and guidance by a number of local groups and residents on a wide range of topics from individual issues over social care to securing the roll-over of funding for a new road crossing in Swaffham Bulbeck.

It has been a busy and varied year and I am sure the coming year will be no different.

There were no questions for Cllr Brown.

District Councillor's Annual Report: *(Clerk read out written report provided by Cllr Allen Alderson).*

The Council's Budget: By making savings last year and this year we have produced a balanced budget without increasing Council Tax.

Waste Collection Details: In March 2012/13 we recycled 30.13% of our waste. In March 2013/14 this had risen to 55.12%. For the 2012/13 year East Cambs was in 286th position out of 352 English authorities. Since the service change we have risen to 51st position and are the top performer of Cambridgeshire authorities.

Housing Figures: 16 new Housing Association homes were built in 2013/14, builds and applications in the pipeline suggest 79 rented and shared equity homes will be built in 2014.15. There will also be two new CLT developments started this year – Soham and Swaffham Prior.

Ely Southern By-Pass: This was given planning permission by ECDC in February of this year but because English Heritage are now objecting, Sir James Paice MP, the Dean of Ely Cathedral, James Palmer, leader of ECDC and Paul Day, Managing Director of Turners of Soham have jointly called in the by-pass to be decided by Mr Eric Pickles, the Government's Communities Minister.

Ely's Markets: Ely Markets are operated by ECDC and are recognised as among the best in our region and are a popular attraction for residents, visitors and tourists alike. They are expected to generate over £170,000 income in 2014/15, well in excess of its budgeted costs and will make an anticipated contribution to the Council's budget of £77,000.

Ely's New Cinema: Turnstone are expected to put in a planning application for a Cineworld six screen cinema on the eastern by-pass by Downham Road in about four weeks. They will provide a 500 spaces car park and an underpass under the A142 for access by pedestrians and cyclists. Also included will be six food outlets and a family pub.

ECDC are currently working with Sport England to produce a Sports Centre and Swimming Pool on adjoining land.

Neighbourhood Panels: These were ceased from 31st March 2014, as it was felt they no longer served their purpose and had been overtaken by other means of communication such as 'Shape Your Place', which uses the internet.

New Committees: Last year ECDC had two statutory regulatory committees (Planning & Licensing) and five other committees. From this next municipal year we will be reducing the five to three and combining their workloads, this should result in financial savings.

Committees, etc: During the last year I have been a member of the Licensing and Community & Environment Committees, vice-chairman of the Development & Transport committee. The last 3 months as its Chairman. I was also a member of the Neighbourhood Panel Review Group, plus the Swaffham Internal Drainage Board. I attended the Association of Drainage Authorities Annual Meeting in London and a seminar in Peterborough.

This year at ECDC I am a member of the Licensing and the Regulatory Services Committees.

Locally: I have been involved in monitoring fly-tipping and traveller activity. We have seen a reduction on both of these in the last year. I also continue to promote our last shop and post office (at Swaffham Bulbeck). This is a most important facility for the community. We must make sure that we do not lose it. Lastly I have been involved in several housing and planning issues in the ward.

There were no questions.

Parish Council Report: *(John Covill reported on behalf of the Parish Council):*

There are always a few perennial items that despite our best efforts keep rearing their heads. Trying to get all the litter bins emptied regularly is one of the problems. Paul Latchford even went to the trouble of writing up a methodology to help the contractors but it is still not entirely reliable.

The summer shift of travellers has arrived on the Drovers and some have moved from Black Drove to Headlake Drove but show no signs of moving from there at present.

The Play Area has needed a few bits of maintenance namely the replacement of the gate in the rear fence and the rebuilding of the picnic table. Thank you to SKP for resolving these jobs. It has now passed the safety inspection for this year with only minor comments which are being addressed.

The Pound has had the wall repaired and the gravel surround has been cleared and a membrane put down with new gravel on top to try to suppress the weeds, though I notice a few have managed to rear their heads around the edge of the membrane.

There have been various one-off jobs:

We have now had the old seats that were replaced with the smart new ones on the roadside at the front of the Village Hall refurbished. We believed that they would break up while being removed but it turned out that they were made of sterner stuff so we have an extra pair of seats. With hindsight we could have saved some cost here but if the seats had broken as expected we would have had a long wait with no seats for new ones to be delivered and installed.

The paint is not adhering to the Village Sign or post very well because of the type of timber used in its construction being salvaged from the Station and having a tar content. We will need to decide on the best course of action to get a permanent solution. This could be a moulded replica or a special covering? JC invited suggestions from those attending.

When the new path was laid to avoid the church steps there was some criticism of the surface. This has now been improved with a layer of gravel.

This was not meant to give the impression of being ungrateful for the donation of the work but that we thought it would have been more efficient to have run the idea past the Council for suggestions before doing the work on a sensitive site.

There has been a water leak on the supply to the cemetery which required a new pipe and tap as it was not possible to find the leakage point in the old pipe and was adding considerably to the water bill.

Other non-maintenance items:

You will have heard the presentation on the housing on Lower End. The Parish Council were generally very pleased with the design of this development but had some concerns about the insufficient parking spaces for the larger properties. This has been partly dealt with. We would thank the owners of the site for trying to make it as friendly to the character of the village as possible.

The Community Land Trust who will administer the affordable housing has also had our support and help during their setting up period and thanks go to Emma Fletcher for her hard work in getting this off the ground.

The Local Internet Providers RASP have put a relay point on St Cyriacs' Tower to improve the speed and reliability of their service. Thanks to David Greenfield for his work on this.

We spent a fair amount of time discussing the merits or lack of merit and costs of changing to wheelie bins. While this change was somewhat forced upon us this being an Irish consultation from ECDC where you make a final decision then send out a consultation questionnaire. They appear to have generally settled in reasonably well however.

There have been various problems with parking on Station Road by the parents of those using the football field. After some firm words with Burwell Tigers this situation seems to have improved. Games have been rescheduled so that attendance at one does not overlap with the following game. We will keep monitoring the situation.

Also on Station Road SKP has managed to get a 90% grant for the installation of an extra passing place near the Allix Arms bridge so that lorries can pass each other without having to drive on the verges.

The PC are in support of the scooter park in principal while keeping in mind the relative costs of construction and insurance and of course any potential nuisance to neighbouring properties.

There was a solar flare or rather a temporary scare of the potential of the country's largest solar farm appearing in the Fen but that has gone away for the moment. A much smaller one 1/100 of the size presently being applied for in Reach.

The Parochial Charities and indeed the Parish Council would like to replace the Chestnut Tree on the play area which is no longer completely healthy. However, the Tree Officer from ECDC decided that it was not sufficiently rotten for them to allow us to take it down. They rather unhelpfully suggested that we should fence it off and/or support some of the branches with props. Neither of which we felt were particularly suitable measures for a play area. So for the moment it will have to remain as it is. The Commemorative Seat that was proposed for John Norris will now have to go on Coopers Green so as not to be in danger of being fallen on by the tree.

We have again made a donation to the Community Car Scheme as we feel that while it may not be used by many those who do need it are in need of the support. Thanks to Janet Willmott for her hard work in setting up and running this scheme.

We were very pleased with the impressive turnout at the unveiling of the Memorial to the Land Army Girls. We felt that they were well worth acknowledging for the help that they gave in feeding the nation during the war. I do not believe that there are many memorials to their work. We would like to thank the Prince family for their work in carrying forward the idea of a memorial, Martin Mead for building the plinth at his own cost and Ken Hazel who donated various interesting artefacts. We would also like to thank Sir Michael Marshall for his presentation on the use of his house as a hostel and for supplying the Champagne. Also the reminiscences of Ralph and Pam Waters on their parents' coincidentally both being land army girls here was an unexpected revelation to many of us.

Various pot hole and faulty street light issues had to be chased up but this usually goes on in the background. I have also managed to locate some errant bird scarers and get them reset.

There are a couple other issues that I would ask all to help with, one being speeding through the village, the other being people not clearing up after their dogs particularly on Coopers Lane and Cadenham Lane.

I would like to thank Karen King our highly efficient and patient clerk who not only has to put up with the Councillors wanting to do the logical thing rather than following blindly the word of the book, but manages to make the Council function very smoothly.

Parish Council – Financial Report: *(The Chair read out financial report provided by Steve Kent-Phillips)*

The Precept remained the same for the fifth year in a row and will remain the same next year too.

We made a paper profit of £6,868 but £1,800 of this is held in trust for the CLT development and £1,288 is reserved for uncompleted maintenance at year end, making a truer figure of £3,700. The main reasons for the profit were greatly reduced mowing last summer and the Clerk's salary being reduced because of time sharing with Bulbeck PC (this has now stopped).

We have £10,000 in reserve for traffic calming on Mill Hill and £10,000 in reserve in case of future traveller problems. We have almost exactly one year's precept in hand as working capital, which is just about perfect.

Copies of the Parish Council's unaudited accounts were available for information.

Additional Village Reports including:

Report for School: *(Roz Chalmers reported to the meeting)*

Photographs showing the School's activities over the past year were on display.

The School is thriving and currently waiting for OFSTED inspection. The School is full as are Burwell and Swaffham Bulbeck.

There will be 38 5 & 6 year olds in one class if School are unable to use the mobile classroom.

Concerns with maintenance - in 2008 the School was top of the building list but then all projects stopped. £85,000 needed for roof repairs/replacement. The School Governors are hoping for funding from the development on Lower End.

Day-to-day items for the School are reported in The Crier.

There followed some discussion on the difficulties facing the School.

Swaffham Prior Youth Club: *(Clerk read out written report provided by the Club):*

No changes on previous year. The Club continued to need a lot of maintenance.

Scout, Cubs & Beavers Group: *(Tim Doe reported to the meeting)*

There were currently 70 children aged 6 – 14 in the Beavers/Cubs/Scout Group plus 10 adults as leaders, assistant leaders and committee members. The Group was proving very successful and popular to the point that the older members did not want to move onto explorers.

Beavers: 16 in total - 6-8 years old. They have a science event planned and their first outdoor camping experience shortly. In June the Beavers & Cubs have a day trip to Scout Headquarters for an activities day. Leader, Amanda, had raised £200 so far collecting old material for recycling.

Cubs: 28 in total. Anna South is leader of the Cubs and is helped by 3 young leaders and an adult volunteer. The Cubs are having their own camp this year in the Field.

Scouts: Francis Reeks retired as Leader in April – a big thank-you to him for all his help. The Scouts are having a summer camp in the Field and will also be taking part in a 33 mile hike. Leader Steve White ran the Easter Camp and in June the Scouts will be taking part in the Fen Rover Hike (Cambridge to Ely).

Beavers, Cubs and Scouts will take part as a group in St George's Day parade. There will also be a parade through the village for Remembrance. Everyone invited to come along and support. There will also be a group Christmas Party.

Committee Members: Currently there are vacancies for Chair, Secretary and from September, Treasurer. Anyone interested in getting involved, please contact Tim.

There were no questions for Tim. The Chair thanked Tim on behalf of all in attendance for his hard work and efforts.

Tim said it was not just him but lots of adults working with him and he would pass this on.

Burwell Tigers Football Club: *(The Clerk read out a brief report).*

The 2013-2014 season has seen the Tigers Football Club grow even bigger. We now have 15 teams of boys and girls and men playing football every weekend.

Our Swaffham Prior ground has been used this season by our Under 6`s,U7`s, U11`s, 2 U12`s teams,U13`s,U14s and our Under 15s! So the pitches have had a lot of use! Without the ground at Swaffham Prior there is no way our Club would have grown as it has. We have over 250 children playing for Tigers now so we see this as a success in itself.

We hopefully have sorted out the car parking issues and over the summer we intend to expand the parking area within the grounds itself.

We have spent a lot of money on the pitches in recent months and more work is due to be done over the summer months.

If any other group in the village wishes to use the field please call Steve O Rourke on 07837 381852.

Village Hall Management Committee:

No reports available at the time of meeting.

Parochial Charities Accounts:

No report. Copies of accounts provided.

Swaffham Prior Community Car Scheme: *(Janet Willmott reported to the meeting):*

Since its inauguration in 2012 the Swaffham Prior Community Car Scheme has facilitated over 150 journeys covering 1,250 miles including trips to the Day Centres both at Burwell and Bottisham, Addenbrookes Hospital, The Keys at Histon and an opticians in Sawston.

We have 6 drivers, including myself, all of whom live in the village. This Scheme is intended for residents of the village only and I am proud to say that to date we have been able to provide transport for every request that has been made. Our passengers really appreciate the service that the volunteer drivers are able to provide and with the support of the Parish Council we look forward to being able to continue to help whoever may need to call upon the Scheme.

The Council has very generously granted two sums of money; one on the initial set up and one this year, which has allowed us to purchase a mobile phone and pay for its usage, although much of the driver contact is done via email, and to pay for stationery and printing. Whilst the passenger pays 30p per mile and any car parking charges, the

Scheme "tops this up" with an additional 15p a mile for the driver, which then matches the payment of Council run schemes. This outgoing represents the largest part of expenditure to which the Parish Council is contributing. Currently, usage of the Scheme is quite low, which I personally find very encouraging, as I feel that it must indicate that there is a good and strong community spirit in Swaffham Prior, that family, friends and neighbours are rallying round to help out with appointments. We are, however, only at the end of the phone should transport be required. Our number can be found on the inside front cover of the Village magazine each month and also on our leaflets which are available here this evening, in the Church and at the Pub.

Open Question Time:

Overhanging hedges, trees, etc: There was discussion on this problem. Reminder for everyone to check their boundary hedges, etc., and keep cut back from footpaths and road to be put in The Crier.

Concerns about increased traffic from new development on Rogers Road: Following discussion it was agreed that the additional measures were needed on the main road (Mill Hill) to reduce traffic speed and ensure pedestrian safety when crossing.

Geoffrey Woollard recorded a vote of thanks to the Chairman.

Meeting closed at 9.25pm