

**Minutes of the Swaffham Prior Parish Council meeting held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> November 2023  
at 7.30pm in Swaffham Prior Village Hall.**

Present: Cllr John Covill, Cllr Alan Durrant (AD), Cllr David Greenfield (DG), Cllr Sandra Gynn (SG), Cllr Peter Hart (PH), Cllr Kent-Phillips (SKP), Cllr Paul Latchford (PL) and Cllr Kate Muscroft (KM).

In attendance: Jude Griffiths (Clerk)

There were 6 members of the public in attendance.

**127/23-24** To receive apologies for absence and to approve reasons for absence where appropriate.

Apologies from Cllr Ruth Lambert.

**128/23-24** Members' declaration of interest for items on the agenda and requests for dispensations

None.

**129/23-24** Public participation for items on the agenda

A member of the public spoke in favour of the Swaffham Crier receiving monthly Notes from the PC, pointing out it was common practice locally using unapproved minutes.

*The Chair allowed item 138/23-24a) to be brought forward.*

**138/23-24** a) To discuss and approve the content relationship with the Crier

DG outlined the situation that led to last month's unhappiness in the PC over the use of unapproved minutes to produce Notes for the Crier – a printed inaccuracy over a divisive subject. Various solutions were discussed at length.

*AD proposed that Notes from the PC meeting continue to be produced for the Crier by the Clerk, without the Clerk's signature and with the endnote "produced from unapproved minutes and may contain errors; approved minutes can be found at <http://www.swaffham-prior.co.uk/pc/minutes.html>"; seconded SKP, passed unanimously.*

**130/23-24** Reports

- a) Cambridge County Council. Report from Cllr Lorna Dupre circulated by email. No representative attended. Cllr Charlotte Cane (ECDC) noted that the survey of well-being for the county had recorded higher than average feelings of loneliness and high levels of concern regarding heating and food costs.
- b) East Cambs District Council. Report circulated by email. Cllr Charlotte Cane attended. Cllr Cane highlighted:
  - The difference between the growth and Infrastructure Fund and the Pride of Place Grant
  - Meetings and discussions with Sanctuary Housing regarding empty properties and alleged poor customer service.
  - The passing of the Single Issue Review of the Local Plan and the need for a new Local Plan as the current one is now over 8 years old and does not provide for enough affordable housing to cover the need identified.

*The Chair invited questions.*

PL asked what the Council viewed as 'affordable'. CC said that officially it is 20% of average which locally is about £350,000, so would be £280,000.

DG commented that more needed to be done to enforce the building of affordable housing agreed under planning approvals.

SKP asked CC to look into the delay in the payment of the FIB grant towards the new playground equipment.

**131/23-24** Approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 12<sup>th</sup> October 2023.  
*DG proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting: seconded SKP, passed unanimously.*

**132/23-24** Matters arising from previous minutes (for information only)  
 None.

**133/23-24** Correspondence for consideration/circulation.

- a) Email regarding proposed Temporary Traffic Road Order application for Burwell Road closure 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> January 2024. Noted
- b) Email from Balfour Beatty regarding the maintenance contract ending.  
 Action: Clerk to email for cost of renewing contract.  
 Action: PL to research alternative suppliers
- c) Emails from Cllr Lorna Dupre (CCC) and Chippenham PC regarding lack of contact from Cllr Josh Schumann. Noted.
- d) Emails from Wicken PC requesting Swaffham Prior PC ask Cllr Josh Schumann for support regarding road repairs and also updates on the state of repairs.  
 Action: Clerk to email Cllr Charlotte Cane to ask for further support.
- e) Email regarding ECDC Planning Parish Conference on 29<sup>th</sup> November – for information
- f) Email regarding CAPALC HR support available – for information
- g) Email from Cambridgeshire County Council regarding Local Highways Improvement funding application window open – for information
- h) Email from Scouts updating on work to the Scout Hut – for information.

**134/23-24** Consideration of planning applications received:  
 None received.

**135/23-24** Accounts for payment including:

a) Clerk's salary and taxes	£658.00
b) CGM – October	£378.00
Total	£1036.00

British Legion poppy wreath and donation (cash card) £50.00

*SKP proposed that the accounts be paid in full; seconded PH, passed unanimously.*

*SKP proposed a transfer of £1000.00 from the savings to the current account; seconded PL, passed unanimously.*

**136/23-24** To hear from Jenna Brame of Cambridgeshire ACRE regarding rural affordable housing.

Jenna Brame discussed a proposal to survey the housing needs of the Swaffham Prior community with an aim of creating a rural exception site of affordable, shared ownership and rented housing. The houses would be built to House Association standards and be affordable in perpetuity. Cambridgeshire ACRE were seeking the PC's support for the survey.

DG established that the landowner could profit from the project, but that other costs were covered by government grants and profits reinvested in other projects, and that rural exception sites could only be for affordable housing.

KM asked the timescale for the survey. It would be distributed in the New Year, for roughly 3 weeks, the report from the data collected written in a month, then the developers brought back the PC to discuss the results.

PL asked what questions would be asked? The survey would be anonymous and PC would get to see the questions before it was distributed.

DG and PL noted that there are specific areas of the parish that there are strong objections to building on, despite the need for housing.

*DG proposed that the PC wait for Cllr Charlotte Cane (ECDC) to check that agreeing to the survey did not affect the PC's right to veto a rural exception site before revisiting the matter in the December meeting; seconded PL, passed unanimously.*

**137/23-24** To review and agree amended Financial Risk Assessments.

*SKP proposed that the amended Financial Risk Assessments be agreed; seconded PL, passed unanimously.*

Action: Clerk to add the Chair's honorarium and Clerk's out-of-pocket expenses to the Action Plan.

**138/23-24** b) to update the Press and Media Policy to cover 'copy' for publication.

Action: DG to prepare a draft update for approval at the December meeting.

**139/23-24** To discuss and agree a quote for operational inspections of the playground.

*AD proposed that the PC accept the quote from Online Playgrounds to carry out operational inspections of the playground 3 times a year; seconded KM, passed 4 votes for, 2 votes against, 2 abstentions.*

**140/23-24** To agree the quote from ETS for work on the Village Hall driveway trees

*AD proposed that the PC accept the quote from ETS to pollard the Village Hall trees; seconded SG, passed unanimously.*

**141/23-24** To agree the quote for metal edging on the cemetery pathway

Postponed to December 2023 meeting.

**142/23-24** To discuss and agree any further action regarding the need for repairs to the Upware Road.

Action: Clerk to email Cllr Charlotte Cane to ask for further support (see 134/23-24 d))

**143/23-24** Report on Heating Scheme.

DG reported.

The Anniversary Evening event of 18<sup>th</sup> October was a useful, informative, successful and enjoyable evening; attendees included current customers, local government representatives, contractors, stakeholders and customers wishing to connect.

Issues:

Lighting – downlighters and daylight sensors have been installed and the effectiveness is being monitored.

Noise – Bouygues have implemented a programme of noise reduction measures at the Energy Centre, the first phase of this is concluding this week and includes: -

- Acoustically insulated enclosures around the compressors, the noisiest plant in the Energy Centre.
- Lots of temporary acoustic fencing on-site.
- Acoustic membrane installed on the personnel door and in the sides and top of the sectional overhead door opening on the gable end nearest to the adjoining property.
- Bouygues and the compressor supplier will be running up the compressors to full load

(occasionally) to measure the effectiveness of the measures installed.

- Once they have measured the effectiveness of the first phase, there will be a second phase of works removing temporary measures with more permanent acoustic fencing and insulated door panels. Additional sound insulation reinforcement will be installed in critical areas.

PL asked if these actions had been communicated to the complainant? DG said yes, they were being kept informed.

#### **144/23-24 Clerk's Report**

- Allotments. 1 full allotment plot and one half plot are under consideration by new renters on the B1102 site. This leaves 3 full plots and one half plot still available.  
Action: Clerk to advertise in the Crier.
- Playground. Anti-pigeon spikes have been attached to the swing frames.  
Action: Clerk to chase up the Grant for the new play equipment.
- Clerk ordered a poppy wreath plus donation to the Royal Legion on behalf of the PC, in line with previous years donation (£50 total) for Remembrance Day.
- The Clerk attended the ECDC PC Conference at Burwell.
- The PC has a statutory duty to have a Nature Recovery Plan in place by 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024 so the Clerk will be circulating the one discussed with Mike Barker at the September/October meetings to be agreed at the December meeting.

#### **145/23-24 Parish Councillors' Reports**

- DG reported on an A-B1102 group meeting. A survey had been published in the Crier, with copies in the church and on Facebook to gather information on the type of bus services wanted. It is important that as many people answer it as possible to gather as much information from as wide a viewpoint as possible. The group now involve representatives from Great Wilbraham to Fordham including all the PCs along the B1102, and transport and technical experts. The Combined Authorities have expressed interest in the design for the Fast Route bus service.
- PH noted that very few of the traffic calming posts on Mill Hill are still standing.  
Action: SKP to chase reports.
- JC noted that the Parochial Charities survey the playground trees for Health and Safety (the clerk requested a copy of the report) and in response to enquiry from the clerk, the Parochial Charities would have no objection to a bench for the use of dog-owning families, outside the playground fence, facing towards the play equipment.

*The meeting closed at 9.17pm*

#### **Open Question Time.**

A member of the public commended the service of the Crier to the parish.