

Minutes of the meeting of the Swaffham Prior Parish Council held on Thursday 9th May 2024 at 7.30pm in Swaffham Prior Village Hall.

Present: Cllr John Covill (JC) (Chair), 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 2 members of the public in attendance.

17/24-25 To receive apologies for absence and to approve reasons for absence where appropriate.

Apologies were received from Cllr Ruth Lambert.

18/24-25 Members' declaration of interest for items on the agenda and requests for dispensations

None.

19/24-25 Public participation for items on the agenda

None.

20/24-25 Reports

- a) Cambridge County Council. Report circulated by email. Cllr Charlotte Cane (ECDC) noted the Greener together meeting taking place on Wednesday 15th May at the Gardiner Hall, Burwell. Cllr Cane also noted extra funds have been supplied to pay for repairs to soil affected roads, which should pay for some running repairs and had already funded repairs to Little Fen Drove.
- b) East Cambs District Council – Cllr Cane attended as representative. Cllr Cane noted that no meetings had taken place and the launch of the consultation on the Hedgehog Protection Policy.

21/24-25 Approve the minutes of the Parish Council meeting of 11th April 2024

There were 2 typos to be corrected.

SKP proposed that the minutes be accepted as a true and accurate record of the meeting following the corrections; seconded PH, passed unanimously.

22/24-25 Matters arising from previous minutes (for information only)

None.

23/24-25 Correspondence for consideration/circulation.

- a) Email from Cambridgeshire County Council offering funding for putting in electric car charging points (see item 26/24-25). Noted.
- b) Email from Charlotte Greeno looking for a place to put a Little Library. *SKP proposed that the PC agree to placing a Little Library behind the Village Hall noticeboard, if the Village Hall committee agree to it; seconded KM, passed 5 for, 3 against.*
Action: Clerk to respond to the email with this suggestion.
- c) Email from James Forsyth regarding Smock Tower Mill planning applications. Noted.

24/24-25 Consideration of planning applications received.

None received.

25/24-25 Accounts for payment including:

a) Clerk's salary and taxes	£613.16
b) RoSPA playground inspection, April 2025	£108.00
c) ICCM membership renewal	£100.00
Total	<u>£821.16</u>

Income:

ECDC first precept instalment	£8500.00
Grant of EROB transfer	£25.00
Allotment rents (total)	£172.50

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

SKP proposed a transfer of £1000.00 from the Business account to the Community account; seconded PH, passed unanimously.

26/24-25 To discuss the option to have electric charging points installed in the village
After discussion, it was concluded that charging points in the village hall car park would lead to unacceptable use of car parking spaces for several hours at a time while cars recharged, preventing users of the hall from parking. On-street charging points (e.g. from lampposts) would be unsuitable due to the village layout.

DG proposed that the Clerk respond to the CCC email declining the offer for the reasons outlined above; seconded PL, passed unanimously.

27/24/25 To receive and consider the RoSPA report for the playground

The report was received and considered.

Action: Clerk to look into replacing the missing bushes and removing the excess chain on the toddler swings.

Action: Clerk to send the certificate for the new equipment to RoSPA to show it was signed off as up to current standards by the manufacturer and installer.

28/24-25 To look into buying a bleed kit for the Parish

SKP noted that the contents of a bleed kit were covered by the first aid kit already in the defibrillator.

29/24-25 To accept a grave memorial request

This was accepted with no comments.

30/24-25 To review the Clerk's pay and holiday hours.

Action: Treasurer to increase the Clerk's holiday hours to 5 hours per month, back dated to January 2024.

31/24-25 Report on Heating Scheme.

DG reported:

- The noise issues are ongoing – DG chasing up.
- Livestock are now present in the grounds.
- The cable from the solar farm is being installed.
- The second round of connections will begin in the summer
- An issue with connecting a house in the Beeches has been resolved.
- In-house display units are being rolled out so that customers can see how much heat they are drawing.

- The Village Hall will hopefully be connected as suggested last month – with the option for the school to join at a later date.
- The Scheme is generally working well and most people are happy with it.

32/24-25 Clerk's Report

- a) The category 2 gravestone checks were carried out on 29th April 2024. 8 gravestones were found to be still category 2 and in need of checking again in 12 months' time. None of the 8 had up-to-date contacts.
- b) The cemetery gate and main allotment gates have been fixed so both now open easily.
- c) All the cemetery allotments, and 7 Lower Allotments plots have been rented for the year. There are 2 half plots still available on the Lower Allotments site.
Action: Clerk to source ground cover for the 2 unrented plots.
- d) Annual Parish Meeting/Annual Village Assembly. The date and time was set as Wednesday 29th May, 7.30pm.
Action: Clerk to book Hall, invite village groups and advertise.

33/24-25 Parish Councillors' Reports

- a) DG had attended a meeting of the A-B1102 group. Parts of the A-B1102 proposals for bus routes (the fast and slow routes through the villages) are to be adopted. The PC needs to consider the consequences of this as Swaffham Prior is on both routes and therefore could become a hub where people change from one service to the other. This may require upgrading of the bus stops and potentially the building of more and/or better shelters e.g. installation of electronic updatable signs etc.
- b) Draft Hedgehog Recovery policy – DG noted that comments had been asked for and suggested that the PC did not as there was nothing to be added. SKP noted that he had forwarded the draft policy to the Hedgehog lady.
- c) Grass-cutting. DG and the PC had received a number of complaints about the cutting of the verges. DG noted that a hard cut back at the beginning of the season had been requested by the rewilding scheme. DG also noted that a thorn bush had been removed from the Cage Hill bank to prevent it becoming overgrown.
Action: Clerk to request that Mike Barker write to the Crier with an explanation of what happens to the rewilding areas, when and why.
Action: Clerk to respond to emailed complaint.
Action: DG and AD to meet with grass-cutting supervisor on Wednesday to discuss issues and grass-cutting schedule.
- d) Grass-cutting. DG noted that complaints had been received when the contractors would not cut verges with cars parked next to them. DG explained that this is company policy to prevent accidental damage caused by e.g. small stones thrown by the trimmers.
Action: Clerk to write to Crier explaining that verges will only be trimmed if there are no cars parked beside them to prevent accidental damage.
- e) Footpaths. PH noted that the path from Cage Hill to Cooper's Green is now very overgrown in places.
Action: Clerk to write to Crier requesting that parishioners cut back vegetation on paths bordering their properties.

Meeting closed 9.04pm

Open Question Time.
None.

Business concluded at 9.05pm.

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