

## **SIDDINGTON PARISH COUNCIL**

### **MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING HELD AT THE MEETING ROOM, SIDDINGTON, AT 7.30PM ON TUESDAY 10 MAY 2016**

#### **PRESENT**

**Cllrs.** Mrs. A. Wagstaff (Chairman), C. Rumble (Vice Chairman), J. Hall, A. Painter, Mrs. M. Painter, Mrs. M. Turner, B. Barnes, N. Deller, Mrs. A. Prosser, Ms. E. Jones and N. Selby.

**District/County Cllr.** S. Parsons.

**Clerk of the Council.** K. Harrison and R. Cowley.

#### **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

John Hall was unanimously elected Chairman, after being proposed by Neil Selby and seconded by Mary Painter.

#### **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Neil Selby was unanimously elected Vice Chairman, after being proposed by John Hall and seconded by Nigel Deller.

#### **CHAIRMAN'S REPORT**

Alison's Report is attached to these minutes.

#### **CLERK'S FINANCIAL REPORT**

This Report had been circulated with the Agenda. John Hall queried the Village Hall Fund Balance of £2500.00, shown on page 2 under Analysis of Bank Balance at 31 March 2016. This was the balance remaining after the payment of £3500.00 in respect of 50% of the kitchen improvements. The Clerk explained that this sum had been transferred to the General Capital Fund in 2016/2017 to form part of the estimated balance figure at 31 March 2017 of £9116 shown in the Cash Flow Forecast later in the agenda. The "Active Together" grant of £2550.00 had been received in 2015/2016 but the work will be completed in 2016/2017. Grant and estimated labour costs have been deducted from next year's Capital Fund available as shown in the Concluding Report on the Spider Replacement later in the agenda.

The Clerk circulated Section 1 (Annual Governance Statement) and Section 2 (Accounting Statements) of the Annual Return and explained that a copy of these two documents signed by the Chairman together with a copy of the Notice of Date of Commencement of Period for the Exercise of Public Rights and a Declaration of Status of Published Accounts would need to be published on the Parish website before Friday 3 June 2016 – the earliest date members of the public can exercise their rights of inspection, objection and questioning of the Auditor. The Clerk reminded members that the internal audit at Northleach from 11-12 May would be followed by the external audit at Bristol. The Clerk's Report was accepted and following the meeting, the Chairman signed the Annual Return and the relevant pages of the Receipts and Payments Account.

## **DISTRICT/COUNTY COUNCILLOR'S REPORT**

Shaun Parsons said that although Cotswold District Council had not increased the local tax rate, a high level of service was still being provided, especially in the Planning Department where a very professional standard was maintained. Thames Water Authority was currently conducting a major investigation to see whether sewerage systems needed upgrading. North Hill Road was finished to a substantial degree but drainage had still not been signed off. Turning to flooding, Shaun praised the work being done by Chris Rumble in conjunction with the Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group South West in identifying all flood risk areas in the parish and proposing solutions. On County matters, the new incinerator will be operational by 2019 and will save an estimated £25 million a year. Deteriorating roads continue to be a major problem and Shaun said he had been disappointed that Siddington Road was not resurfaced when originally planned. However, this situation should be resolved when contractors finished digging up the road. In concluding, Shaun said he had nothing to report on the possibility of Cotswold and West Oxford Councils merging, except to say that he hoped the merger was not proceeded with. Mary Painter referred to the protracted method used by Highways to fill in potholes in Pound Close and Shaun said he would investigate this further. The current "Areas of Responsibility" list for members was passed to John for his information.

Alison requested that the item "Appointment of Clerk of the Council" be moved up from the second part of the agenda to be dealt with at this point. This was agreed.

## **APPOINTMENT OF CLERK OF THE COUNCIL**

Alison reported that she, Chris Rumble and the Clerk had interviewed Robert Cowley, Clerk of South Cerney Parish Council informally on 29 April 2016. Mr. Cowley had been provided beforehand with an amended Contract of Employment, based on the current Clerk's contract. Various points were raised by Mr. Cowley and all were resolved. It was agreed that his commencement date would be 1 May 2016 to provide an overlap with Kent Harrison and that his salary and hours per week would be the same – two months' salary being paid in June 2016. The salary scale is LC1 in the Substantive Benchmark Range at the maximum, point 22, and the hours per week would be 7.5. It was also agreed that a dedicated laptop and mobile telephone would be provided by the Council and these costs would be reimbursed after purchase.

The Chairman asked Robert to provide a brief personal background and it was noted that although he now lived in South Cerney, he had lived in Siddington for over 20 years and would therefore be no stranger to matters affecting the village.

## **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 12 April 2016 were approved and signed.

## **MATTERS ARISING**

### **Outstanding Issues –**

- Chris was asked to deal with the dog signs for the playing field by the end of next month.
- John was pursuing the possibility of a new dedicated parish website and would email the details to members shortly.
- Alison reported that the nature area project would take shape in the near future and approval was given for the purchase of two picnic tables from Hayley Sawmills.
- Chris confirmed that the damage caused by hedge cutting on Park Way had resolved itself.

- It was agreed to resolve the matter of painting the sand store door as soon as possible. Unless Andy West could carry out the work shortly, another contractor would be found.
  - The latest progress on the Welcome Pack was noted.
  - On highway matters, the Clerk reported that the reference number for clearing the drain at the railway bridge stanchions on the Ashton Road was 11102027. The repositioning of the reflective posts in Park Way was reference number 11081789 and the missing school sign by the village shop was 11072155. These and the other items listed were still outstanding.
  - The progress on Pound Close pot holes had been reported earlier by Mary Painter.
  - On footpath matters, the reference number for hand rail repairs needed along the canal path by Upper Siddington Bridge was 11093177.
- In future, these numbers would be included in the report.

## **PLANNING**

### **North Hill Road**

John reported that Highways have agreed to the proposals to demolish the tree and reposition the bus stop. Work can now begin on rebuilding the bus shelter in its new position. It is estimated that the contractor will leave the development by the end of August and it was noted that, to date, there had been no reports of either theft or vandalism at the site.

### **Severalls Field**

The Clerk had circulated details of Consultation Responses from Hunter Page Planning to Cotswold District Council prior to this meeting. It was agreed that these addressed the concerns previously raised by the Parish Council.

### **16/01187/FUL – Field Access and Field Gate at Barton Farm, Park Way**

New details received from Cotswold District Council related only to changing the site address from Siddington School to the above. The Clerk reported that although the majority view was no objection to this application, he had, nevertheless, included in his email to the Planning Officer the strong feeling felt by some members that the field access was too close to the school entrance. In addition, concerns had been expressed that the applicant was using an agent from a construction management company, which seemed disproportionate to the scale of the work proposed.

### **Disposal of Land at the Twenties**

There were no comments on the Cotswold District Council proposal to use delegated authority to dispose of a small piece of land adjacent to the property on the Park Way corner of The Twenties.

## **FINANCE**

- The monthly schedule of cheques, circulated with the agenda, was approved. The cheque totals were:-

- 1299 – K. S. Harrison - £3336.51
- 1300 – A. B. West - £15.00
- 1301 – F. Lovatt - £270.68
- 1302 – Playsafety Ltd.- £84.00

- It was noted that 75% of the Council's precept in the sum of £15,901.00 had been received on 19 April 2016. The Clerk said he could not explain the extra £1.00, but presumably the payment at the end of September will be £5299.00. He added that Cotswold District Council had paid precepts on a 50% basis in April and September until 1995, when Siddington Parish Council made a case for a 75% - 25% payment (more grass cutting payments in the spring/summer) and the basis was changed for the whole Cotswold area.

### **PLAYING FIELD/FOOTBALL CLUB**

- The Clerk referred to his Concluding Report on the Spider Replacement which had been circulated with the agenda, together with a Cash Flow Forecast for 2016/2017, assuming no grants were available. He explained that he had sent a grant application to the Gloucestershire Playing Fields Association and the likely outcome, based on previous experience, would be a grant of £500.00. An application form had been obtained from Cotswold District Council and this would be completed and sent before the Clerk left at the end of the month. Shaun Parsons said that he had some money left from the "Active Together" Fund and the Chairman said he would pursue this. The Clerk, in referring to the Cash Flow forecast, said that he had assumed that the budget would be spent in full. In reality, however, there had usually been a saving. On page 2 of the Clerk's Financial Report, the saving on net expenditure for 2015/2016 was £1288. The commencement date for the installation of the Woodland Climber 7 was Monday 6 June 2016 and the work would take about one week. The laying of the bonded rubber mulch would be by another contractor and this process depended on the weather. The Clerk's two Reports were accepted.

- RoSPA's Play Area Safety Inspection Report had been circulated between meetings. It was noted that the comment on the toddler swings was that the item was at the end of its useful working life, even though the risk level was "low". The Clerk explained that this did not mean immediate replacement but that monies should be accumulated as and when available, so that new swings could be provided in the future. The only other negative comments were that there was rotting timber on some of the seating and the signage was insufficient on the main gate.

### **CORRESPONDENCE**

As Highway matters had been dealt with previously, the Clerk referred to an email from Mitcheldean Parish Council inviting the Council to join them in the fight against vandalism and anti-social behavior, especially in and around recreational grounds and play areas. It was decided not to participate and the Clerk will reply accordingly. Alison referred to the latest Police report which showed four offences in April, compared to ten last year and twelve to date compared to twenty four last year. The offences were two burglaries and two theft.

### **MEETINGS**

- It was noted that there was a Community Approach to Road Safety on 19 May 2016.  
- Alison said she would be producing the posters for Annual Parish Meeting and the agenda would include the Police report for the year and the Rosie Rumble Award.

### **POINTS FOR FUTURE CONSIDERATION/NEXT MEETING**

No points were put forward and the next meeting would be 14 June 2016. No members of the public were present and the meeting closed at 9.25pm.

Chairman