

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting

held on Wednesday 13th March 2024 at the Silsoe village hall.

Present:

Cllr Kelly in the Chair

Cllr Offer, Cllr Kevan, Cllr Mann, Cllr Appleman, Central Bedfordshire Councillor Anna French.

155/24 Apologies and Declaration of interest/ Request for dispensation

Cllr Willard, Cllr Gearey. Central Bedfordshire Councillor Liz Childs

156/24 Confirm the Minutes/ Matter Arising:

The Minutes of the meetings held on 7th February 2024 were agreed.

157/24 Public participation:

The wildflowers will be planted in the agreed area by the end of march. Clerk will notify David Granger.

A resident attended for an update from the Sports centre. Cllr Kelly confirmed that the Terms of agreement have been reached and Stevenage Leisure will continue managing the centre for the next year. Activities and the administration of the centre will be reviewed. The resident confirmed that the centre seems regularly short of staff, lots of cover but no communication with the cover staff, misunderstandings with management. Cllr Kelly thanked the resident and confirmed he likes residents to get involved with the management. The resident expressed an interest in becoming a trustee. The Gym and swim membership will no longer be available, Stevenage leisure will need to contact members and consider refunds.

A resident attended to discuss the dangers of Warren Lane following another recent accident and concerns over it being used as an alternative route during the Clophill roadworks. Cllr Willard and the ward Cllrs have reported their concerns to CBC and continue to monitor it.

158/24 Police representative:

None

159/24 Report by Ward Councillors:

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- Greenwood application has been rejected, it could go to appeal or judicial review. The also may decide to have it included in the Local plan.
- CBC are now consulting on School transport. For most of Central Beds the changes will not cause an issue but in Silsoe it will affect a substantial number of children. Most children go to Arnold Academy and that leads onto Harlington, which is the catchment secondary school, under the proposal transport will only be paid to the nearest school which is Redbourne school, this school is oversubscribed and would not be able to offer the places to the children in Silsoe as it's a feeder school for Ampthill. CBC are also looking to 'train' the SEN children to travel on the standard school buses rather than offer an alternative. The PC will prepare a statement to submit to CBC on behalf of residents, they will also contact Mr Kelly, CEO of the Trust and will put a post on FB.
- The PC thanked Ward Cllrs for the funding towards the defibrillator.

160/24 Finances:

Approved payments and invoices due for payment in the current year so far total £102,707 (Feb meeting this was £91,001). This does include the cost of the service and repairs to the mower (£2,350.64 excluding VAT), the pay area repairs (£3,700 excluding VAT) and grass cutting costs (£3,517 excluding VAT).

No further allotment rents have been paid, so the total for rents received remains £1,500.30. PC do need to agree the payment for the pass on of club membership fees included in the rents received, and review what further rent payments are outstanding.

Over the last month the PC have received the £550 ward councillor funding towards the replacement defibrillator, the annual grass cutting contribution of £1,250.07 from CBC, and £759.41 of quarterly interest on the Barclays Deposit account. Clerk will request the annual Nationwide statement to confirm the annual interest income on this account which is due now.

The bank account balances as of Mar 12th are:

Current a/c	£40,180.37	was £49,387.53
Deposit a/c	£203,824.15	was £203,064.74
Nationwide	£83,051.51	was £83,051.51

Adjusting for the value of unapproved invoices included and expected to be paid, this leaves a total current PC cash balance of £315,753.72 (balance last month was £326,915.98). The speed signs payment was paid by cheque which cleared over the last month, so the uncleared balance of payments is now zero excluding the payments to be reviewed tonight.

There are currently reserved balances of:

£25,000	General reserve	was £25,000
£1,234	Allotment deposits	was £1,234

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£85,279	Sports Centre	was £85,279
£89,191	Miller Homes Play Areas	was £89,524
£187	Village Hall	was £187

Based on our budget for 2024/25, this means there is £45,638 (balance last month was £46,358) currently available for new projects between now and March 2025. Despite some unbudgeted income this month this balance has dropped as I have allocated £1,740 to the Beacon repairs project as approved in the last meeting.

This is the last month in the current financial year. Whilst there will still be some more items of expenditure to add in before the end of the financial year, it is clear that there will be outstanding budgets on most line items (as is normal). Most of the smaller unspent amounts will simply be added to the funding available for new projects in 2024/25, Cllr Kevan proposed that the following amounts be rolled over to increase the 2024/25 budgets for those line items (again as is normal):

Grass- rollover
Streetlighting -rollover
Trees and hedges - £8000 remaining so rollover £4000
Village hall grant – rollover
Professional fees – rollover

Seconded by Cllr Kelly, all Cllrs agreed.

March payments:

D Granger £3,705.60

RJW Machinery £2,820.77

Website/Domain £162

N Power £63.79

Village hall £30

Anglian Water £17.32 & £62.83

CPM Playgrounds £4,440.00

Credit: Ward Cllr funding £550

Payments proposed by Cllr Kelly, seconded by Cllr Offer, all agreed.

161/24 Planning:

- CB/24/00499/FULL 78 Mander Farm Rd, single storey rear extension and replacement of framing to existing front, no objection.
- CB/TCA/24/00118 Tree works in a conservation area, 14 The Oaks. No objection.
- Cllr Offer has contacted the Planning officer for Taymer application, the outstanding conditions (speed and crossing) have been partially discharged. It has been agreed acceptable to move the crossing to further down Barton Rd, this will mean the bus stops are opposite one another. There are some issues with the verges and trees.
- Local Plan: Cllr Offer attended a workshop by CBC regarding the New Local Plan. Cllr Offer confirmed that there needs to be robust policies that are policed. CBC are looking at ways to make the Local plan more applicable, all Parishes will want to fight their corner, but that is the purpose of the Neighbourhood Plan, Cllr Offer highlighted that the NP is not always taken into consideration by the Cllrs at the DMC, it has been rejected on at least 2 occasions. Cllrs will be attending Neighbourhood Plan training in preparation for DMC hearings. There is an opportunity for the PC to submit comments, before 22nd March, Cllr Offer has emailed some information to Cllrs and a response will be agreed.
- Greenwoods has been rejected.
- Bungalows, 9 on Barton Rd. The PC have been contacted by a developer regarding an application yet to be submitted for bungalows. There will be an entrance close to the new bus stop location. The PC will respond to the developer that they will not support the application and it is not an area as identified by the Neighbourhood plan or a site within the Local plan.
- Cllr Offer has contacted Homes England, regarding the triangular piece of land that has been sold recently, exchange and completion will be completed in the next month and Homes England will then confirm the position and new owner.
- There has been contact from CBC regarding a proposed addition of a claimed bridleway between Barton Rd and Bridleway no 6. The PC will object.

162/24 Projects:

1. MILLER HOMES/FIRST POINT:

No further update.

2. TRAFFIC/HIGHWAYS:

Cllr Willard update:

Harji Hirani (CBC Traffic Management) walked round village with Ward Cllrs and Cllr Willard. He has promised traffic monitoring and some action in 2025 or 2026 subject to budgets.

The High Street Road closure caused massive issues particularly in Vicarage/ Fir Tree/Church Road and Newbury Lane. Ward Cllrs and Cllr Willard were in

constant contact with CBC and demanded signage was improved and in places removed from making Church Road the official diversion.

Meeting with Cllr French booked with English Heritage and Wrest Park Enterprises for 21st March.

Traffic meeting booked for 17th April with the 7 presidents who volunteered to get involved.:

3. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR:

Cllr Gearey and Clerk met with the Police last week to discuss the anti-social behaviour in The Conifers. The Police agreed to go and visit the properties in the area to discuss ASB with individual residents, they will report back their findings. Cllr Gearey and clerk will also meet with the Ward Cllrs and CBC.

4. D DAY:

Cllr Kelly is making the arrangements to have the Beacon repaired. Clerk is making arrangements with the Lord Lieutenant's deputy. Cllr Gearey has spoken to the fish and chip shop, which has recently been sold, they will no longer be able to commit to the D Day arrangements, Clerk will try and arrange a mobile fish and chip shop. Silsoe Community society will not be able to run a bar, but the Millenium green will offer refreshments. Cllr Mann will be a Town Crier for the evening and is arranging his costume. The PC may consider a competition for children to have the opportunity to light the beacon.

5. SCHOOL TRANSPORT CONSULTATION:

Discussed earlier by the Ward Cllrs.

6. ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:

Clerk emailed the roles and responsibilities out to all Cllrs and included the feedback from Cllrs. Where possible there is one lead person against each item, but others can assist or work alongside the lead person. All Cllrs agreed to the list, Cllr Appleman will shadow and work alongside Cllr Gearey.

7. ANNUAL PARISH MEETING

Clerk now have 19 groups that have confirmed they are attending! The indoor bowls club will have a carpet set up for people to try, the Horticultural centre will be selling their produce and SOS will be providing refreshments. The village hall has agreed that the PC can borrow tables. Aurora has created an event on FB and the website and will be putting out regular posts and reminders. The PC will have a table and

demonstrate the work being carried out. Cllr Kelly and Cllr Appleman will move tables the day before.

8. EMAIL ADDRESSES

Clerk attended a Data Protection course recently and recommended that the PC should use designated PC email addresses. Each Cllr agreed to set up a separate Cllr email address.

9. CODE OF CONDUCT:

The draft Code of conduct has been sent to Cllrs ahead of the meeting and the training session has been arranged for 20th March 2024, the training will be £150. Cllr Appleman proposed the adoption of the new code of conduct, seconded by Cllr Kevan, all agreed. The training will be recorded for those who are unable to attend.

10. PUBLICITY AD ADVERTISING:

Items for FB:

Play area repairs.

ROSPA inspections.

Abandoned bike at the Northern play area.

Schools' consultation

Bridleway proposal

163/24 Consultations and correspondence:

The following correspondence was received:

- 80th Anniversary D Day flag available, Cllr Kelly will order at a cost of £38, proposed by Cllr Kelly, seconded by Cllr Mann.
- Portrait of His Majesty the King, Clerk has ordered.
- Pavements safer for everyone E petition
- Local plan workshops, Cllr Offer has already attended.
- N Power are holding electricity prices.

164/24 AOB:

- Defibrillator have been regularly checked; the allotment heater is broken< Cllr Offer is obtaining a new one. There is more sealant required, Cllr Mann will look into this. The PC do not have a copy of the contract with Heartbeat, Clerk will look into this.
- Cllr Gearey and Cllr Appleman will put up the TPO signs.
- VAT, clerk will submit a return.
- Date of next meeting will be 27th March 2024, to be confirmed via email, this will be to incorporate the Bloor agreement.
- Clerk will book ROSPA inspections for all play areas.

165/24 Date of next meeting:

The next meeting will be on Wednesday 27th March 2024

Signed

Date