

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Sonning Parish Council held in the Pavilion, Pound Lane, Sonning, on Tuesday 13 May 2014 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT.

Mr P J Doyle, (Chairman), Mr A Evans, Mr A E Farnese, Mr T Fisher, Mr J Hargrave, Mr S D Liddiard, Mrs P Pownall, Ms V Reeve, Mr I Runnalls. Mrs L A Bates (Clerk). By invitation Cllr M Haines (WBC).

APOLOGIES/WELCOME TO VISITORS.

There were no apologies. The Chairman welcomed all those present.

8465: ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN.

Mr Farnese took the Chair for this item and asked if Mr Doyle was prepared to stand for election. Mr Doyle confirmed that he was. Mr Runnalls proposed Mr Doyle as Chairman, Mr Fisher seconded and this was unanimously approved.

8466: CHAIRMAN'S DECLARATION OF OFFICE AND TO ABIDE WITH THE CODE.

The Chairman signed the Declaration of Office and to abide with the Code. The Clerk witnessed this.

8467: MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

The Minutes, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman.

8468: DECLARATION OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations of interest.

8469: COUNCILLORS PORTFOLIOS.

PLANNING	<b>Mr Doyle (Chair)</b> , Mr Farnese, Mr Liddiard, Mr Runnalls, Clerk Named substitute: Mr Fisher, Mrs Pownall
HIGHWAYS	<b>Mr Evans (Chair)</b> , Mr Runnalls, Clerk Mr Bell, Mr B Hulley, (co-opted)
TREASURER	Mr Hargrave
FINANCE	
1. Regular Financial Control	Treasurer, Clerk. Mr Williams (co-opted).
2. Budget & Precept.	Treasurer, Clerk. Requests from Councillors with spending responsibilities.
RFO	Clerk
TECHNICAL SERVICES W.G. (AMENITIES Inc. PUBLIC TRANSPORT & SPRING CLEAN)	<b>Mr Farnese (Chair)</b> , Mr Doyle.
RECREATION & ENVIRONMENT Inc. CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND	<b>Mrs Pownall (Chair)</b> , Mr Farnese, Mr Liddiard. Mr Pascall (co-opted) Clerk
NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH	<b>Mr Evans (Chair)</b> ,
WEB SITE	<b>Ms Reeve (Chair)</b> , Clerk

#### 8470: APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES.

The following appointments were confirmed.

ALMSHOUSE TRUST	MR PARKER (From Feb '09)
SONNING & DISTRICT WELFARE TRUST	MRS BALDWIN (Ongoing)
SONNING EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATION	MRS BALDWIN (Ongoing)
PEARSON HALL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE	MRS ROBINSON (Ongoing)
SONNING WINNING ASSOCIATION	CHAIRMAN (ex officio)
SLTC	Vacant
TWYFORD AGE CONCERN	MR McCULLOCH (Ongoing)
FIRE BRIGADE TRUST	CHAIRMAN (ex officio)

#### 8471: REVIEW OF FINANCIAL REGULATIONS.

The Clerk had previously circulated the Financial Regulations. The Chairman proposed approving these, Mr Fisher seconded and they were unanimously approved.

#### 8472: CORRESPONDENCE.

Annual Rounder's Match. Mrs Collier had asked the Council's permission to hold the Annual Rounder's Match on the field on Friday 18 July. Mr Travers had confirmed that this would not conflict with the Cricket Club and it was agreed to allow the match to go ahead.

Appointment to Borough/Parish Working Group. WBC were setting up this group in order to facilitate better communications between themselves and parishes. Each parish was being asked to become members of this group and to appoint a representative and one standing deputy to attend the quarterly meetings. There was some uncertainty about joining this group but Mr Farnese agreed to attend the meetings and Mr Fisher agreed to be the standing deputy.

Letter from ICO. The Clerk said that the ICO had received a complaint from Mr \*\*\*\*\* and, following an initial assessment, had considered it eligible for formal consideration under s50 of the Act. No details had been given but copies of Mr \*\*\*\*\* letter to the Council dated 12 January 2014 and the Council's reply, dated 31 March 2014, to a further letter from Mr \*\*\*\*\* (not supplied). No decision had been made and the case would be allocated to a case officer who would contact the Clerk in due course.

Oxfordshire River Trail Consultation. A copy had been received. Although Sonning was marked on the map no information about the parish was included. All the information was about the larger Thames Towns on the Oxfordshire side such as Henley and it was agreed not to comment.

Lottery Funding for W.W.1. Lottery funding had been awarded to parishes in the Wokingham Borough for the Heritage Trail, display boards and banners.

Blandy and Blandy Invoice. The Chairman said that it had been agreed that he should seek legal advice following receipt of the letters and e-mails from Mr \*\*\*\*\* which insisted that SPC should divulge the names of the private individuals who had contributed to the Bridge Lighting. Mr \*\*\*\*\* actions had forced the Council, and ultimately the Community, to incur huge expenditure on legal fees when seeking legal advice to refute this. WBC had advised that data protection protected the individual's rights to privacy but, as SPC did not have access to legal representation the only option was to consult the solicitors. Following discussion the Chairman proposed paying the £950 plus VAT to Blandy and Blandy, Mr Farnese seconded and this was unanimously approved. Mr Liddiard said that he had looked back over two years of minutes and it was difficult to see what Mr \*\*\*\*\* view was or what he wanted.

Campaign Against Waste. This would be held on 27 May at Smallmead.

## 8473: PLANNING.

The Chairman said that a bat specialist had to be present while the existing roof to the old Fire Station was removed. If there was evidence of bats the developer would need to provide bat boxes in the surrounding trees. As part of the stag beetle mitigation the developer had to supply rotting materials to provide a habitat for the beetles. A safety cordon had to be installed around the onsite machinery. There was some doubt about the suitability of the position chosen for re-siting the bell tower and the Chairman agreed to discuss this with the planning officer David Wetherill. Mr Runnalls asked about bonfires. The contractors had lit bonfires on four days in the past week leaving only one person in charge who always wore a mask. Despite neighbour's complaints the fires continued and they were being affected by the smoke and fumes from the industrial waste that was being burnt. Cllr Haines said that it was not illegal to have bonfires but there was a code to follow. The Clerk agreed to write to Environmental Services, which were based in Newbury, and residents would be encouraged to write as well. The Chairman said that he would mention bonfires at the APM. The planning committee had dealt with an application for poly tunnels for growing fruit at Sonning Farm. Mr Evans said that the flags had been removed at the Fire Station but the poles were still up. Cllr Haines said that WBC had received the first formal planning application under the new regulations where neighbours had to be informed.

The following applications were ongoing: 1 Sonning Gate (F/2012/1398); Land facing Duffield Road (F/2013/0634); 11 Hawthorn Way (F/2013/1549); 32 West Drive Sonning (F/2013/2523); 19 Old Bath Road (F/2014/3060); Elm Gables Parkway Drive (F/2014/0144); Little Court Farmhouse (LB/2014/0465 & F/2014/0465).

The following applications had been approved: 7 Old Bath Road (VAR/2014/0192); Former Fire Station (C/2014/0408)

The following applications had been refused: There had been no refusals.

The following new applications had been received. Sunnyridge Parkway Drive (F/2014/0744) Erection of two storey side and rear extension plus single storey rear extension: 15 Pound Lane (F/2014/0720). Erection of a single storey rear extension to south east corner and single storey infill extension to rear north east corner: Sonning Farm Charvil Lane (F/2014/0707) Erection of 3 double span poly tunnels plus erection of shed & 3 water storage tank: Sonning Golf Club Duffield Road (F/2014/0744) Erection of new entrance gates/boundary fence and hedge plus formation of new kitchen store (part retrospective). (Amendment to planning consent F/2011/1654.): Farm Charvil Lane (F/2014/0815) Erection of a roof over the area between the research unit and adjacent barn at Sonning Farm to create a new covered storage area.

## 8474: CONSERVATION ASSESSMENT.

The Chairman said that the Society would finish dealing with the document mid-June. Mr Driver had completed his environmental assessment.

## 8475: QUESTIONS FOR BOROUGH COUNCILLOR.

Cllr Haines agreed to provide Mr Farnese with the contact details for Julia Green who dealt with gullies. Mr Farnese asked about potholes. Cllr Haines said that WBC had an extra £900,000 for potholes, some from the government and some unspent from other budgets. WBC had asked Councillors to point out the worst potholes in their area so a list could be drawn up. There was a scheme to raise the Winnersh Road following recent flooding a road in Arborfield. Mr Farnese asked about the potholes by the Farm and Cllr Haines said that the University had been approached by WBC for failing to clear their ditches. Mr Farnese said the potholes by the School had been partially fixed but the one by the crossing was very bad. Mr Farnese asked if there was an update about the Playhatch Road. Cllr Haines said that Oxon

were carrying out an environmental study and had three potential schemes. The Chairman said that he had learnt that

#### 8475: QUESTIONS FOR BOROUGH COUNCILLOR.

British Gas were to dig up a newly resurfaced road, the utility services were not working together as anticipated. Cllr Haines said that, under a new scheme, anyone wishing to carry out works on the highways would need to apply to WBC. The A329 was to be repaired in the near future. Mr Fisher asked about the third bridge. Cllr Haines said that there had been a meeting in London, organised by Rob Wilson (MP), which Cllr Keith Baker had attended. Representatives from SODC and Oxon CC had attended and representatives from LEP (Local Enterprise Partnership) were also in attendance. LEP membership included Microsoft. Oxon CC had gone off to gather and review more data. WBC were fully supportive of the third bridge as were LEP and everyone on the Berkshire side of the River were in complete agreement. The Chairman read from a newspaper article about the Playhatch Road problems and Cllr Haines said that Oxon CC had asked WBC to take over the Playhatch Road but they had declined.

#### 8476: PARISHIONERS QUESTIONS

There were no questions.

#### 8477: DEFIBRILLATOR.

Ms Reeve said that the defibrillator had not been used yet. Unfortunately the Ambulance Service were very busy and hadn't been able to provide the training. Although a good idea, training was not essential as instructions were on the Defibrillator and anyone using it would be talked through the procedure. The Chairman said that he had made enquiries about alternative training and had been quoted £85 per head for eight to fourteen people. Defibrillators had become important and there was a big demand for training.

#### 8478: WEB SITE.

Ms Reeve said that together with Tracey Hicks and Sid Liddiard they had collected most of the material, which was now with Mr Gilmore. The second poll for the new logo had resulted in a 5 to 4 vote for Mr Ennis' version. The possibility of using both versions in different ways had been discounted. No launch date had been arranged and it was likely to take a further two months to complete. Following discussion it was agreed to have the final version ready to launch at the September meeting, which would coincide with the autumn newsletter for full coverage. Before that a variety of people would be asked to check out the site for feedback. As there was a possibility that Ms Reeve would not be at the APM Mr Liddiard agreed to present her report. The Clerk would arrange for the new logo to be framed and for a full size colour copy to be printed.

#### 8479: FINANCE.

- a) Report. The Clerk had prepared a report which was noted.
- b) Income and Expenditure Account. The Income and Expenditure account had been previously circulated. Mr Farnese proposed adopting it, Mr Hargrave seconded and this was unanimously approved. These would be presented at the APM on 15 May.
- c) Internal Audit. The Clerk and the Chairman had met the Internal Auditor who had carried out the required process and considered the Council's procedures satisfactory.

8479: FINANCE (Cont'd).

d) Payment of Accounts

April

Inland Revenue Tax £166.65 & NIC £99.91	266.56
Quadron – Dog Bins March	83.58
SSE Street Lighting M'tnce	838.86
BALC Annual Subscription	329.24
Mr K Trimmings Litter – March	145.83
PHMC - Office Rent	221.00
Blastoff – Palmer Pump Repairs	<u>3492.84</u>
	5377.91

8480: PROPOSALS FOR QUEENS JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS.

The Chairman said that one of the Bridge lights had failed. As this was an equipment failure there was no cost implication. SSE Contracting were ordering a replacement from Germany and returning the failed light for assessment.

8481: HIGHWAYS.

Mr Evans said that one volunteer to assist with the speed checks had come forward. With Mr Farnese, Mr Fisher and the two co-opted members of the Highways WG there were sufficient numbers to form a team. Training was necessary and Mr Evans would contact the police to arrange this. The Chairman said that there had been one or two low loaders collecting the pontoons from the River but otherwise there seemed to be fewer lorries using the route. Mr Evans said the traffic lights on the Playhatch Road were still in place and potholes were getting worse. There were two by the crossing in Pound Lane which were now linked together and were very deep. Mr Evans would attend the Neighbourhood Watch meeting on 14 May.

8482: RECREATION AND ENVIRONMENT W.G.

- a) Report. Mrs Pownall said that Mr Liddiard was concerned about the security of the sit on lawn mower. Mr Liddiard said that the lock had been forced as had the lock to the compound and a ladder had disappeared. The strimmer, which had been in the same shed as the mower had also disappeared. The SCC mower was stored under the roofed area between the two metal storage sheds and it might be possible to put the Council mower in the same place. The possibility of obtaining a third metal store was discussed and Mr Farnese would check out costs. It was agreed that the Clerk should purchase the same style lock and chain as the one on the Wharf gate to provide better security for the compound. Mr Liddiard would also purchase a round lock for the shed. Mr Liddiard said that there had been problems with the mower but removing the grass box seemed to be the answer.
- b) Safety Checks. Mr Farnese had carried these out and said that some equipment needed to be cleaned. The ROSPA report indicated that some of the equipment did not comply with current standards but this did not mean they were a dangerous condition.

- c) Field Maintenance Quotes. Mrs Pownall had spoken to Mr Travers (SCC) about the top dressing and he had confirmed that this needed to be carried out every year however there would be less to do in the following years. The Chairman said that the Council had already agreed to go over budget for field maintenance and the top dressing would result in a total

#### 8482: RECREATION AND ENVIRONMENT W.G.

overspend of £2405. Mrs Pownall said that no field maintenance had been carried out for some time prior to 2012. The maintenance had made a difference and the sportsmen agreed that top dressing was essential. Mr Liddiard said there was also the problem of the field drainage. Ms Reeve asked if the Clubs could fund raise as the work was essentially for organised sport but Mrs Pownall felt this was not the Clubs responsibility. Mr Farnese said that professional advice was needed and few players lived in Sonning. Mr Runnalls asked the reason for the extra maintenance. Mr Hearn (CFC) said very little maintenance had been undertaken in the past and the ground had been worn away under the goal mouths and in the centre of the field leaving it grassless and muddy. The junior footballers were playing elsewhere to minimise the problem. The new contractor had undertaken some work to make the cricket outfield safe but the goal mouth at the far end was very bad. It was essential to top dress using 40 tonnes of grass seed rather than the 20 tonnes which had been suggested as a way of saving money. The Clubs would be prepared to pay more if they could see improvements and it would be possible to obtain grants from the FA if everyone worked to together. The Chairman said the whole situation would need to be considered if the work went ahead. Mr Farnese proposed spending £1975 on the top dressing (total for maintenance £4405), Mrs Pownall seconded and this was unanimously approved.

- d) Request for Score Board Store. No drawings had been received. Mr Farnese said that the pitches were a priority. Mr Liddiard said that the field looked very good and a lot of this was due to SCC and it was agreed that more information was required including the plans.
- e) Dog Waste. The Chairman said that the situation had now improved but the problem fluctuated. Following discussion the Chairman agreed to replace the old posters.

#### 8483: TECHNICAL SERVICES.

Safety Checks. Mr Farnese had completed these and would clean the play equipment over half term.

Great House Request. There was no update.

Spring Clean. Mr Farnese said that twenty six volunteers had taken part and he would be contacting them all to thank them.

#### 8484: WW1 CELEBRATIONS 4 OCTOBER.

The Chairman said that he had spoken to Mrs Gascoine who would organise the entertainment and the Pearson Hall Social Committee would arrange the food. The Hall was booked for Saturday 4 October. The evening would begin with verse and songs followed by the meal and then a second round of song and verse. Mr Fisher said that some descendants of those listed on the War memorial had been contacted. It was agreed to consider what could go on display during the evening.

#### 8485: ACTION LIST.

This was reviewed and updated.

8486: DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

The next Meeting would be held on Tuesday 10 June 2014 at 7.30pm.

Signed..... Dated.....