

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Sonning Parish Council held in the Pavilion, Pound Lane, Sonning, on Tuesday 9 September 2014 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT.

Mr P J Doyle (Chairman), Mr A Evans, Mr A E Farnese, Mr J Hargrave, Mr T Fisher, Mr S D Liddiard, Mrs P Pownall, Ms V Reeve, Mr I Runnalls. Mrs L A Bates (Clerk). 5 Visitors.

APOLOGIES/WELCOME TO VISITORS.

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

8520: MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

The Chairman said that a resident had raised question about including the names of people who had written to the Council in the minutes with the ICO. The ICO had clarified this and accordingly the Council had rectified the minutes. The details of any correspondence could be included in the minutes as long as the writer's name and anything in the contents that would identify the writer were redacted. However if the person spoke at an open Council meeting it was permissible to include their name and any comments. The Chairman asked if Councillors were happy to have the name in minutes 8510 and this was agreed unanimously. The Minutes, having been previously circulated, were taken as read and signed by the Chairman.

8521: DECLARATION OF INTEREST.

There were no declarations.

8522: CORRESPONDENCE.

WBC Local Flood Strategy. The consultation on this would close on 31 October.

WBC Gypsy & Traveller Local Plan. This consultation would close on 2 October and could be completed on-line.

Sports Awards. Nominations closed on 14 October. Mrs Pownall was considering this.

Sonning Gates. The Sonning and Sonning Eye Society had copied the Council in on their request to WBC for permission to renovate the 'Gates' in Sonning Lane.

Footpath from Sonning Bridge towards Charvil. The Clerk had referred a complaint about the poor condition of the footpath to WBC. It was understood that the footpath had now been closed.

Emails 23 July, 24 July, 3 August, 27 August. A series of e-mails had been received concerning the naming of persons in the minutes, breaching the data Protection Act, Commemorating WW1 and a variety of comments concerning dealings with the ICO. The Chairman read out the e-mail of 27 August and said that all Councillors had received a copy. The Chairman proposed sending a copy of the e-mail to the ICO and this was unanimously agreed. Mr Farnese asked if this would be complete with an explanation and the Chairman agreed that it would.

8523: PLANNING.

The Chairman said that there had been some difficulties over the Fire Station. The contractors were commencing work too early in the morning and David Mann, the enforcement officer, had agreed they could arrive at the site but work should not begin until 8.00am. There had been no planning decision about the flags, which had been erected without planning permission. There were concerns about the original fire station building 'disappearing'. The planning permission stated 'conversion' of the building but the majority of the building had been demolished. Councillors agreed that planning permission should have been sought if the intention was to

## 8523: PLANNING (Cont'd).

demolish the original building. Building control did not seem concern themselves with this and Mr Runnalls said that building control was no longer operated by WBC. Mr Farnese asked if retrospective planning permission was required. Mr Runnalls had spoken to the planning officer who was preparing a report for the legal department and wondered who ensured that the original building remained. Cllr Haines said that building control would step in if the existing building was found to be unsafe or below standard. The Chairman said that planning permission had been granted on the understanding that the existing building would be retained.

The Chairman said that there was a new application for South Lodge. Cllr Haines said that he had put a precautionary listing on Birchley, anticipating that SPC might want this done and the Chairman said he would report back to Cllr Haines following the planning meeting on 17 September. Cllr Haines said that the intention was to demolish the existing dwelling and to replace it with four (a net increase of three). Mr Farnese asked about August Field and the Chairman said there was a legal issue.

The following applications were ongoing: Sonning Dene (F/2014/1402) Erection of two storey rear extension and side porch. Also raise roof to rear: Sonning Fire Station (A/2014/1327) Erection of three Foamex signs and 3 Flags 5m high at the front of the developments.

The following applications had been approved: 32 west Drive (F/2013/2523): Star Court (F/2013/2455): Elm Gables Parkway Drive (F/2014/0144): Little Court Farmhouse (LB/2014/0465 & F/2014/0465): Sonning Farm Charvil Lane (F/2014/0707 & F/2014/0815): Cherry Tree Cottage (F/2014/1234).

The following applications had been refused. South Meadow Cottage (CLP/2014/0973).

The following new applications had been received. 100 Thames Valley Park Drive (A/2014/1668) Advertisement consent for the proposed erection of 1no internally illuminated freestanding logo sign: 100 Thames Valley Park Drive (CLP/2014/1606) Certificate of lawfulness for the proposed demolition of glazed link way between two buildings: Sonning Mead Thames Street (F/2014/1778) Erection of part two storey/part single storey side and rear extensions to dwelling following removal of rear and side single storey extensions: South Lodge Sonning Lane (F/2014/1832) Erection of two storey side rear and front extensions to dwelling following removal of existing conservatory: 25 Glebe Lane (F/2014/1874) Erection of a two storey rear extension to dwelling following demolition and removal of existing single storey extension with canopy: Birchley Old Bath Road (F/2014/1879) Erection of 4no dwellings plus parking access and landscaping following demolition of existing dwelling and outbuildings.

## 8524: CONSERVATION ASSESSMENT.

The Chairman said that the assessment had been completed and a professional pair of eyes needed to look over it. Tony Thorpe BA (Hons) was an ex planning officer and had quoted £250 to prepare a report on the draft, which could then be sent to WBC. The Chairman proposed spending £250, Mr Farnese seconded and this was unanimously approved. The Chairman asked the Clerk to instruct Mr Thorpe. Mr Hart asked which document would be sent to Mr Thorpe and the Chairman said the one submitted to SPC by the Society.

## 8525: QUESTIONS FOR BOROUGH COUNCILLOR.

Mr Farnese asked about the consultation on the Flood Strategy and the Chairman said this would be discussed on 17 September. The Chairman said that OCC had produced a good Flood Strategy. Cllr Haines said that WBC had not been involved in the decision on repairs to the Playhatch Road but understood that work would commence on 15 September for completion in November. The temporary traffic lights would remain in place and the road would not be closed. There were no planned improvements, the road would just be reinstated.

## 8526: PARISHIONERS QUESTIONS

Mr Hugh Stewart said that he had concerns about SPC paying £900 in legal fees and asked if there was any way of recovering the money and taking out an injunction to prevent further occurrences. The Chairman said that there was a need to clarify the situation and he would read out the question that had led to the situation. Mr Evans said that Mr Stewart had raised a good point, but it would be difficult to achieve in the present climate. However, Mr Evans said, it was better for the Council to be well informed and it was prudent to be aware of their legal position. The Chairman said that an injunction would be expensive and read out the question, which had prompted the Council to take legal advice, in full. The Council had replied that the names of the 'private individuals' who had contributed to the Bridge lighting fund could not be provided to the writer as this was covered by the Data Protection Act 1998. The writer did not accept this and pursued it further by complaining to the ICO. Mr McCulloch interrupted at this point asking why the Chairman did not explain that the Council had previously fallen foul of the FOI and were not being truthful, he would be happy to explain the situation to Mr Stewart after the meeting. The Chairman asked Mr McCulloch if he was saying that the Council were lying and Mr McCulloch said that the Council were dishonest. The Chairman asked the Clerk to minute the accusation but immediately Mr McCulloch said that he would retract the statement and say that the Council were economical with the truth. Mr Runnalls said that the ICO had supported SPC's position i.e. they were correct to withhold the names under the Data protection Act. Mr McCulloch asked why then did the minutes mention Mr \*\*\*\*\* name. The Clerk explained that there had been some confusion about this and it had been assumed initially that Mr \*\*\*\*\* business would be paying but this had not been possible. Mr McCulloch said the Council should apologise to Mr \*\*\*\*\*. Mr Farnese said that this was Mr McCulloch's opinion, he himself had been working hard all day and did not want to hear any more of this diatribe. Mr McCulloch said that Mr Farnese should act like a Councillor and that SPC were incompetent. The Chairman said that it was a long time since there had been such unpleasantness and said that he would have to ask Mr McCulloch to leave the meeting if he continued to interrupt and talk over hm.

## 8527: WEB SITE.

Ms Reeve said that she had circulated the draft web site for Councillors to view and it was agreed that this was excellent. Ms Reeve said that some details were missing but most things had been completed and they were aiming to launch the web site at the end of September. Mr Gilmore was arranging 'SPC' e-mail addresses for Councillors to avoid the necessity of using their personal e-mails. Currently Councillors would need to reply via their own e-mails but the alternative was to ask the Clerk to reply via the SPC e-mail. The Chairman said there was a need for everyone to include a phone number, this could be for SPC business only, not a home phone. Mrs Hicks said that she only had copies of past newsletters in PDF form and Mrs Pownall agreed to provide these in 'word'. Mr Gilmore had offered to 'run' the web site free of charge but it was agreed that Mrs Pownall and the Clerk should familiarise themselves with the process to cover all eventualities. Mrs Hicks asked if there could be a note for the web site regarding the publication of names of those speaking at meetings and the Clerk would do this and include details on the public agendas. Ms Reeve asked everyone to proof read the draft web site and said that a wider cross section of proof readers was also needed. It would be left to Ms Reeve and Mrs Hicks discretion as to who these were but a list would be sent to SPC. Mrs Hicks said that Mr Gilmore had been brilliant throughout the process and Ms Reeve said a lot of work had been involved.

## 8528: FINANCE.

- a) Report. The Clerk had prepared a report which was noted.

8528: FINANCE (Cont'd).

b) Payment of Accounts (July and August)

Mr Runnalls proposed making the following payments. Mr Evans seconded and this was unanimously approved.

July

Quadron – Dog Bins June	84.24
Mrs L A Bates – Honorarium less tax	2460.50
Mrs L A Bates – Telephone	40.00
Mrs L A Bates – Zen Web site Domain name	59.40
Inland Revenue – Tax 187.50 NIC 90.87	278.37
Southern Electric – St Light Energy	469.16
Mr K Trimmings Litter – June	145.83
British Gas – Pavilion Electricity	41.84
Sonning Landscapes Mow Wharf 52 + mow Playground 26	78.00
Henley Contracting – Mow whole field	528.00
SSE – St Light M'tnce	727.72
Cedric Gilson – Internal Audit	45.00
Quadron – Dog Bins July	<u>84.24</u>
	5042.30

August

Sonning Landscapes Mow Wharf 52 + mow Playground 52	104.00
Sonning Landscapes Cut- Pound hedge 30.00 Rec hedge 140	170.00
Mr K Trimmings Litter – July	145.83
Henley Contracting – Mowing July	640.00
Thames Water – Rec Water	24.66
	<u>220.97</u>
	1305.46

- c) Objection to Auditors. Mr McCulloch said that he had not made a complaint to the Auditors and asked the Clerk to rename this item 'Objection to the Accounts'. Mr McCulloch said that he had wanted reassurance from the Auditor. Following the Auditor's recommendation SPC had agreed to meet him and following this meeting he had decided to withdraw his objection.

8529: PROPOSALS FOR QUEENS JUBILEE.

Mr Fisher and Mr Hargrave were continuing to seek further contributions for the lighting. The ICO decision had been reported in min. 8526

8530: HIGHWAYS.

Mr Evans said that Sonning were in the middle between OCC and WBC and it was difficult to get any information about repairs to the Playhatch Road. There had been several break-ins including Beech Lodge, the SLTC building and one in Thames Street. Residents had become aware that someone was 'camping' in the middle of the Pound Lane/A4 roundabout. The Chairman said that he had seen an overweight Lafarge lorry (with Hanson written on the side) drive up from the Bridge and along Thames Street at 3.00pm on 5 September and it was agreed that the Clerk should write to Lafarge. However Mr Runnalls said that he had the contact number of the Playhatch manager and would speak to him first. Mr Evans said there had been

### 8530: HIGHWAYS (Cont'd).

a huge traffic 'jam' on 5 September created by a tail back from the temporary traffic lights on the Playhatch Road. The Chairman said that, eventually, some cars had driven through the Mill car park, which had allowed traffic to continue flowing. The Chairman said that generally there were no large lorries using the route through Sonning. Mr Evans said that the lorries supplying the Fire Station site were often causing an obstruction in Pound Lane. Ms Reeve said that one of the contractors had parked his transit van in her driveway, which was some distance away and in a different road to Pound Lane. The vehicle had no tax and was virtually touching one of her cars also parked in the drive. When eventually identified the driver had removed the vehicle immediately. The Chairman asked Mr Hargrave what businesses in Reading were likely to do if the traffic congestion in the area was not resolved and Mr Hargrave said they were likely to relocate. Mr Evans said that there was a need to do something about water management the area and Mr Runnalls said that the Thames Conservancy had warned about the effect on surrounding areas.

### 8531: RECREATION AND ENVIRONMENT W.G.

- a) Report. Mrs Pownall said that there had been several favourable comments about the way the field was looking. The Chairman agreed to ask Henley Contracting to provide a quote to tidy the tennis hedge up.
- b) Safety Checks. Mr Farnese had carried these out. There was some sign of wear to the safety surface under one piece of equipment and the Clerk would get a quote from the manufacturers. Mr Farnese would cordon the area off.
- c) SCC Scoreboard. Mrs Pownall said there was no update. The Chairman had seen Mr Travers who would bring a copy of the drawing to the October meeting.
- d) Wharf Repairs. The Chairman said that the area was improving and it had been seeded. Mr Collier was mowing gently and the patches had almost disappeared. Patches of grass in the wider area were being damaged by barbecues and it had been suggested that one or two concrete slabs should be put down to prevent this.
- e) Accident on the Outside Exercise Machines. A child's leg had been badly bruised while she was using the rowing machine. The Clerk would contact the manufacturers for their views and ask if there was anything that could be done to minimise the likelihood of this happening again.  
Mr Farnese said that he had observed a 2-3 year old climbing up the slide (rather than the steps), the parents seemed oblivious of the danger.  
Mr Liddiard said that a fungus was growing on the old tree stump in the playground and was also growing 10 to 12 feet from the stump. It continued to grow despite attempts to cut it back and apply Jeyes liquid. The Clerk would ask Julian Clark to look at the problem.

### 8532: TECHNICAL SERVICES.

- a) Safety Checks. Mr Farnese said that he had carried out the inspection and would prepare a register.

Request from Great House. The Chairman said that area had become a mess since SPC had agreed that the hedge should be lowered. People were walking into the garden from the Wharf/towpath through a gap and the area was very unkempt. The Chairman would meet up with the management to discuss the unsatisfactory situation.

8532: TECHNICAL SERVICES (Cont'd).

- b) Mr Liddiard said that Mr van Went was doing a short history for the web site and had asked if he should include the Wharf and Councillors supported this
- c) Condition of Allotments. Mr Liddiard had repaired the hedge. Mr Farnese said the allotments were flourishing but he would check again in the autumn.

8533: SONNING & SONNING EYE REQUEST.

Mr Fisher said that Mr Hine from the Society had spoken to him about a member of the Council sitting on their executive and Mr Fisher had said that he would bring the suggestion to the meeting. Mr Fisher would be prepared to do this if SPC were in agreement. The Council had not objection but the Clerk would check with WBC to see if this were permissible.

8534: WW1 CELEBRATIONS 4 OCTOBER.

The Chairman said that he would like to hold another meeting and this was agreed for Monday 15 September at 8.00pm in the Sonning Club. A list of contributors was being drawn up and hostesses appointed to prepare the food. Posters would be sited around the Parish by the end of the week. There would be a small display and the hall would be decorated with flags and other memorabilia. The Parish Council would provide a welcome drink.

Payment for third Banner. The Clerk said that two banners had been supplied but there had been sufficient information to cover a third. The Chairman proposed paying £76 plus VAT for the third banner, Mr Farnese seconded and this was unanimously approved.

8535: ACTION LIST.

No Action List had been prepared.

The Chairman said that the Scarecrow Committee had been asked to make a contribution towards a defibrillator to be placed outside Beech Lodge but they had turned it down as it was unlikely to be used. Mr Driver had said that SCC might be prepared to make a contribution. Ms Reeve agreed to prepare a draft request letter to be sent to all the sports clubs and other users of the field with a view to raising the necessary funds.

Mr Liddiard had handed a letter to the Clerk, which she read out. Mr Liddiard intended to resign from the Council with immediate effect and thanked Councillors for their friendship and support during his two years as a Councillor. Mr Liddiard also thanked the Clerk. The Chairman said that he was sorry to see Mr Liddiard go and thanked him for all the work he had undertaken, it would be a big loss to the Council. Mr Liddiard said that he would be happy to undertake some work if it would be of assistance.

Mr Farnese said that he had attended the newly established Borough Parish Working Group meeting, which was not inspiring and no refreshments had been offered. Parish representatives made their views on planning/planners very clear, which reflected SPC's own experience.

8536: DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

The next Meeting would be held on Tuesday 14 October 2014 at 7.30pm.

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