

Minutes of the Monthly Meeting of Sonning Parish Council held in the Pavilion, Pound Lane, Sonning, on Tuesday 12 February 2013 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT.

Mr P J Doyle (Chairman), Mr A E Farnese, Mrs T Hicks, Mr S D Liddiard, Mrs P Pownall, Mr I Runnalls, Ms V Reeve, Mrs L A Bates (Clerk). By invitation Cllr. Haines (WBC), 2 Visitors.

APOLOGIES/WELCOME TO VISITORS.

Mr M Green (hospital), Ms V Reeve (unwell). In the absence of Mr Green Mr Farnese took the Chair.

8185: DECLARATION OF INTEREST.

The Clerk said that the previous information, that Councillors required dispensation in order to discuss the Budget, had been revised following an announcement from the Government. Therefore there were no declarations of Interest.

8186: ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN.

Mr Farnese said that Mr Green had resigned due to work commitments but was due to chair the first item of business, election of Chairman. Unfortunately Mr Green was in hospital and could not attend; thanks were due to him for all his hard work, during difficult times. Mr Farnese said he wished Mr Green all the best for his health and at work and this was unanimously echoed by everyone present. Mr Farnese then asked if there were any nominations for Chairman. Mrs Hicks nominated Mr Doyle, Mr Runnalls seconded and in the absence of any further nominations Mr Doyle was unanimously elected as Chairman.

8187: CHAIRMAN'S DECLARATION OF OFFICE AND TO ABIDE BY THE CODE.

The Chairman signed the declaration of Office and to abide by the Code and the Clerk witnessed this.

8188: MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING.

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

8189: CORRESPONDENCE.

Oxon CC Reply. The Clerk had written to Oxon CC reiterating the fact that SPC could not allow equipment etc. to be stored on the Wharf while works were carried out on opposite bank of the river. A reply had been received acknowledging this and informing the Clerk that, due to the bad weather, work had been delayed until March

ROSPA. The annual playground inspection was due in April and it was agreed to ask ROSPA to carry this out.

BALC Training. A training session on Freedom of Information and Data protection was taking place on 27 February. It was agreed that the Clerk and Mrs Hicks should attend and the Council would pay the fee of £80.

WBC Consultation on New Communities. The Chairman said that the Planning Committee would respond to this.

## 8189: CORRESPONDENCE (Cont'd).

Major Projects Co-ordinators Meeting WBC 19 February. The Chairman and Mr Farnese would attend this. Cllr Haines said it would be important for someone to attend these meetings if possible as the electrification of the railways would be discussed at some point. The Chairman said that he would like to raise the broadband issue at the meeting.

Letter from Head Teacher. Mrs Green had responded to the letter regarding the school parking problems and the potential danger to pedestrians from cars parked alongside the bus shelter. Mrs Green had passed the Council's concerns on to parents and staff but felt that, unless the situation was monitored regularly people would continue to park next to the bus shelter. If bollards could be installed this would have some impact. The school would continue to promote their green policy, would review their travel plan and possibly carry out another travel to school survey. The After School Club numbers were at their highest, which had reduced the number of vehicular movements at the end of the day.

Lorry Watch. Mr Hulley had asked about restarting the Lorry Watch but understood that it should be organised by SPC for the Council's insurance to cover the volunteers. Mr Runnalls agreed to co-ordinate the Lorry Watch but would not be prepared to head up the Highways WG. Mr Runnalls would contact Mr Hulley. It was understood that the Police intended to be on site in order to observe any contraventions of the 'weak bridge' limit. They would have cameras on board and there would be a visible police presence. The Chairman said that Mr Green thought that the legislation covering the 'weak bridge' limit had been poorly written. Cllr Haines agreed to look into this.

School Cottage Barn. The Chairman said that this was being re-pointed using lime mortar.

Meeting with Vicar of Sonning. The Chairman had agreed to meet the Vicar on 15 February regarding a Church matter. Mrs Hicks would accompany him.

Lights in Thames Street. The Chairman said that there had been a complaint about halogen lights in Thames Street shining into neighbours' houses. The Chairman had spoken to the owner and these had been turned off.

## 8190: COUNCILLORS RESPONSIBILITIES.

The Clerk agreed to circulate the current list of responsibilities in order to consider any changes at the March meeting.

## 8191: PLANNING.

Planning List. The Chairman said that there was an existing 6ft brick wall to the front of 24 West Drive. The builders had cut out sections ready to insert the railings so only 'pillars', and small section of low brickwork, remained.

Saxon House. The applicant had withdrawn the application as the form had not been completed correctly and had told the Chairman that he only wanted to keep a horse in the field.

31 Pound Lane. This was a new application and Mrs Pownall was dealing with it.

Fire Station. A new application was in the pipeline. The current position was that the Listed Building application had been approved on condition that full planning permission was in place. The full application had been refused due to the S106 money not being paid, so they had no permission. Cllr Haines said that, unless there were changes to the previous proposal, he would find it difficult to list the application as it had been granted and only refused on a technicality. If there were no significant changes WBC were likely to approve the new application. Mr Liddiard asked if there were minutes of the planning meeting where the decision was made and was told that there were but they were not detailed.

## 8191: PLANNING (Cont'd).

Mr Liddiard had made a list of the main concerns, which included: WBC knew the application was based in incorrect plans: WBC had ignored the request for them to look at the new plans: WBC had ignored manual for Streets: SPC comments not given adequate weight even though the Planning Chairman had said that the proposal hinged on the highways issues: the zeal of the planning committee in going against the WBC policies: the inadequate access could result in an accident/injury. The Chairman said that the highways report used calculations based on the road having a central reservation and the officer had failed to inform the committee about the statistics showing that there were 7,400 vehicle movements in Pound Lane each day.

WBC Park and Ride Consultation. The Chairman said that he understood that one of the objectives was to extend the Park and Ride into T V Park. Cllr Haines said that Reading and WBC had won a bid for Park and Ride funding and they had to find a replacement for the Lodden Bridge facility.

Consultation on SDL's. The Chairman said that the Planning Committee would respond to this Consultation. Cllr Haines said that WBC was beginning to consider infrastructure. In the past, on some housing developments, key elements had been omitted.

C A Exhibition. The Chairman and Clerk had met Claire Lawrence and Giles Stephens at the WBC Offices to provide them with an update on the C A Consultation. They had been responsive and enthusiastic and were keen to assist. WBC did not appear to have a mechanism for receiving and dealing with C A Assessments in place. The Chairman said that the exhibition had been successful with 59 visitors over the two days. The six week consultation period would finish on 24 March. The replies/comments would then be assessed and the report would be revised if necessary. The Chairman would write to thank those who visited the exhibition.

Complaint to WBC. This was now going through the complaints procedure.

Mr Farnese said that there were proposals to extend the RBCS further, which could impact on the Sonning Lane parking.

The following applications were ongoing: 1 Sonning Gate (F/2012/1398) 32 West Drive (F/2012/1435) 19 West Drive (F/2012/1468) Old Forge Cottage Pearson Road (F/2012/2384 & LB/2012/2385) Greendown Pearson Road (C/2012/2390).

The following applications had been approved: There were none.

The following applications had been refused. There were none.

The following new applications had been received. The Granary Charvil Lane (F/2012/2440) Erection of a two storey rear extension and first floor extension over existing garage a single storey front extension to form porch alterations to fenestration plus conversion of garage to create habitable accommodation to dwelling: Redingensians RFC Old Bath Road (F/2012/2425) Erection of a two storey rear extension and renovation to existing clubhouse: 31 Pound Lane (F/2013/0117) Two storey and single storey rear extension and proposed single storey front extension to create porch. Demolition of existing garage and proposed erection of new detached garage.

## 8192: CONSERVATION AREA ASSESSMENT.

This had already been reported on.

## 8193: QUESTIONS FOR BOROUGH COUNCILLOR.

Cllr Haines said that WBC would vote on their budget the following week. £5.5M had been cut from their government grant and they had been the lowest funded authority in the country and were now even lower. WBC would maintain services but there would be cuts

#### 8193: QUESTIONS FOR BOROUGH COUNCILLOR Cont'd).

across the board. The £600,000 central tax rebate would be passed on to parishes but this would affect their precepts. The S106 contribution scheme would be changed to a Community Infrastructure Levy and the money raised in this way could be used to fund infrastructure etc. The government were trying to build their way out of recession and empowering communities.

#### 8194: PARISHIONERS QUESTIONS

Mr Atkins asked about the hedge growing over the path in the High Street, which he had mentioned to the Council some months previously. Mr Atkins had spoken to the owner but he still hadn't addressed the problem, if SPC couldn't help he would report it to WBC. Mr Farnese said that he had looked at the problem and even if the tree were cut back the steps to the cottage protruded into the path by about 9 inches. It might be possible for the tree to be cut back to match. Mr Farnese would speak to the owner again and let Mr Atkins know the result.

Mr Atkins said that he would like to congratulate Mr Doyle on being elected as Chairman.

Mr Liddiard said that the Pound Lane footpath between the A4 and the school was slippery from wet rotting leaves. The Clerk would ask WBC to clear and try to obtain a schedule of road/footpath sweeping.

Mr Alex Evans said that he would be interested in taking up the vacancy on the Council. He had lived in the village for 20 years and his wife had been born in Sonning. They had been involved in the local school, assisted with the environmental audit and he had attended a WBC planning meeting and spoken on behalf of SPC. Mr Evans said that he would like to get more involved and his wife was fully supportive. It was agreed that Councillors would discuss this informally at the end of the meeting and the Chairman would let Mr Evans know what the next steps would be.

#### 8195: REPLY TO ICO.

The Clerk had circulated a draft reply to the letter informing the Council that Mr McCulloch had complained about their decision not to publish the notes of the closed part of the meeting held on 12 June 2012. If the OCO ruled that the notes had to be given to Mr McCulloch the Council would have no alternative. The Council considered Mr McCulloch's letters to be vexatious and were concerned that publication of the notes private to the meeting on 12 June could well result in further letters and demands from Mr McCulloch. Following discussion it was agreed that the Clerk should send the letter to the ICO.

#### 8196: PROPOSALS FOR QUEENS JUBILEE CELEBRATIONS.

The Chairman said that approximately 50% of the funding had been raised. He would now approach the landlord and landlady of the Bull. Mr Liddiard asked if Sonning Eye were involved and the Chairman said that the French Horn and the Mill Theatre had agreed to make contributions. Mrs Pownall was looking at the possibility of obtaining a grant.

The Clerk would inform the Fire Brigade Trust of the Chairman's appointment and ask when their meetings took place so he could attend as the Council's representative.

Mr Liddiard and Mr Farnese would check the street lighting and report at the March meeting.

#### 8197: FINANCE.

a) Report. The finance report was circulated and noted.

8197: FINANCE (Cont'd).

- b) Payment of Accounts. Mr Runnalls proposed making the following payments, Mrs Pownall seconded and these were unanimously approved.

February 2013

Mrs R Hulley – Litter January	145.83
SSE Contracting – St. Light Repairs	60.65
SSE Contracting – St. Lighting M'tnce	839.53
SSE Contracting – Service to new light Charvil Lane	434.84
SCS – Mowing	91.68
SCS – Worming field	<u>348.00</u>
	1920.53

- c) Santander. The Clerk had checked the interest currently being received on the investments, 1.75 on the £44,500 in National Savings Income Bonds (received monthly) and 0.75 on the tennis court refurbishment fund in the National Savings Interest account (paid annually). Both funds were available immediately without loss of interest. The Maximum that could be guaranteed under the government scheme was £85,000 and £54,358 was already invested with Santander. Following discussion Mr Farnese proposed, in view of the limited access to funds, that no further investments were made with Santander, Mrs Pownall seconded and this was unanimously approved.
- d) Budget Precept. Mr Green had revised the budget as agreed at the January meeting but due to the fact that he was in hospital had been unable to circulate it for approval. This would be carried forward to the March meeting.

8198: HIGHWAYS.

Mr Runnalls had agreed to head up the Lorry Watch W G. The Clerk agreed to write to Mr Hart to invite the Society to give a short presentation on their views on highways at the April meeting.

8199: RECREATION AND ENVIRONMENT W.G.

Mrs Pownall said that she had met the suppliers and agreed positions for the eight pieces of exercise equipment. Mrs Pownall was in the process of completing the application for an Awards for All grant, which would cover the costs.

Safety Checks. In the absence of Ms Reeve there was no update.

8200: TECHNICAL SERVICES.

- a) Report. Mr Farnese would inspect the condition of the Wharf and bring recommendations to the March meeting. Mr Farnese had met Thames Water and now knew where the meters were. It appeared that Beech Lodge was not connected to a meter.

8201: POLICE AND SECURITY.

The Chairman said that, with Mr Green's resignation, responsibility for this would need to be discussed at the March meeting.

8202: RENOVATIONS TO HIGH STREET WATER PUMP.

The Conservation Officer had accepted the schedule provided by the contractor however the

8202: RENOVATIONS TO HIGH STREET WATER PUMP (Cont'd).

Chairman was concerned that the company was proposing to use epoxy resin to repair the pump prior to painting. As the two materials moved at different rates the resin was likely to fall out. Having made enquiries the Chairman said that metal needed to be welded to metal. Several companies could carry this out. The Clerk would speak to Mr Fry to explain this and to suggest that he contact a local company know to be capable of carrying out such work.

8203: NEWSLETTER.

The closing date for articles was 18 March. The Chairman, Mr Farnese, Mrs Hicks and Mr Runnalls agreed to prepare articles.

8204: WEB SITE.

Mrs Hicks said that the web site was mostly up to date. The soft ware was out of date and not user friendly. Mrs Hicks would research options and bring to the March meeting.

8205: ACTION LIST.

This was reviewed and updated.

The Chairman suggested that the Clerk ask Mr Gilmore to advice what computer would be best suited to the Council's needs.

Thanks were due to Mr Liddiard who had screened the waste bin to the side of the pavilion and planted the new tree.

8206: DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING.

The next Meeting would be held on Tuesday 12 March 2013. The date of the Annual Parish Meeting was confirmed as Tuesday 21 May 2013 in the Pearson Hall.

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