

**BISHOPSTONE PARISH COUNCIL**

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting  
held at 7:30 p.m.  
on Monday 4 March 2013  
at Hinton Parva Village Hall**

**Those Present:** Simon Jenkins (Chair), Lesley Drewett (Clerk), Karolyn Tapper (Vice Chair), Julian Cooke, Ian Thompson, Nigel Crisp, Andrew Greenhalgh, Ian Thomas, Stuart McGuigan, Cllr Andrew Bennett.

**1. Approved Apologies**

Douglas Stevens.

**2. Declaration of Interests**

There were no declarations of interest.

The meeting then closed for Public Question Time.

**3. Public Question Time**

**Septic tank – Hinton Parva**

Mr Brian Skeffington and Mr Gerry O'Connor of Swindon Borough Council had agreed at short notice to attend to discuss the problems with the septic tank in Hinton Parva. At this point only one member of the public was in attendance and, as they had come to listen to the discussions, this part of the agenda was taken before the Parish Assembly, but has been left in this part of the minutes for consistency.

Mr O'Connor informed those present that he is the Housing Property Service Manager and the septic tank falls under the regime of the Housing Revenue Account. Mr Skeffington explained that his role is the major capital improvement section. The septic tank in Church Road was constructed in the late 1960s and at that time it was adequate for the treatment of foul water from the four Council owned properties for which it was designed. Over the years more connections have been added and there are currently eleven properties connected; he was not aware of any permission being given for these.

A Councillor present informed Mr Skeffington that he has a document stating that he is legally connected to the tank and the Chair stated that he was aware of at least one other in this situation.

The following was agreed:

- a) A solution must be found urgently to the current continual overflowing of the septic tank.
- b) Funding will be from an SBC contingencies budget; Mr Skeffington stated that the focus for SBC is on resolving the problem rather than budgetary issues or allocating blame.
- c) Swindon Commercial Services have been instructed to empty the tank on a weekly basis.
- d) Following an incomplete survey in July 2012, SBC intend that a further camera survey will be carried out in the next two to three weeks by a specialist contractor; it was suspected that rain/storm water is finding its way into the tank, causing the overflowing, but there is no evidence to date of this. The survey will enable SBC to assess the current situation and put a cost effective solution in place.
- e) It was likely that the topsoil of the leachate field will have to be removed to a depth of 1 metre and treated as contaminated waste.
- f) SBC (Legal department) will be writing to the owners of the eleven properties connected to the septic tank, and will share the names of the residents concerned with the Clerk. A Councillor asked that the letter should be couched in more friendly

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terms than a previous one and should request the occupants to check their own title deeds for any permission to connect to the septic tank.

- g) SBC will notify Cllr Cooke who should be contacted at SBC in the event that the Environment Agency gets in touch with him about the discharge from the tank.
- h) An improved barrier will be placed around the discharge in the field, to exclude animals and children.
- i) The repair on the septic tank should take place independently of the legal investigation regarding deeds and permissions to be connected to the septic tank.

With regard to timings, Mr Skeffington stated that he hoped to have the survey completed within four weeks, but could not confirm any future dates until he had the report. The Chair asked that the Clerk be informed as and when things happen, in order that she can circulate it to Councillors and the parishioner. Cllr Bennett suggested that the Chair should host an open meeting between SBC, including the Legal department, and the residents to review SBC recommendations to resolve this long standing issue; this could be around the end of April / early May.

The Chair thanked the representatives from SBC for attending the meeting.

### **Planning application – land at Short Drove, Hinton Parva**

The applicant (Mr Wilson) and his architect had joined the meeting during the above discussions and the Chair invited them to speak.

Mr Wilson expressed his disappointment with the Parish Council's response to SBC with regard to his planning application for a dwelling on land at Short Drove. He explained that he had attended Parish Council meetings on several occasions in order to be transparent. He gave the background for wanting to build the property for his son for those Councillors that had not been at the previous meeting. He then requested that Councillors provide him with their views on the property and the reasons for the objection.

Mr Wilson's architect explained that having been transparent and having had conversations with Councillors they had changed the application and brought it forward. He felt that there were two issues that Councillors had problems with; the first was the policy of building in the open countryside. He then asked what Councillors would expect to see in a village location and gave several examples that he would expect to see. For this reason he disputed the Parish Councils description of "alien" in their letter of objection. Like Mr Wilson, he had felt that Councillors had, in principle, approved the design.

The Chair explained that the Parish Council had thought the plans were reasonable, in isolation, when first presented, but at that stage it was not aware that there might be a policy issue.

Cllr Thomas explained that he had not been at previous meetings, but he felt there were two issues, principle or policy, and design. He went on to say that design is subjective and gave his own personal views for design. He explained that at the last meeting, Councillors had concerns with the height of the building and but they wished to clarify the policy issue with SBC before committing on the design. Cllr Thomas had spoken with the case officer and she advised him that she anticipated a policy objection, not only on the grounds that the site was by definition "open countryside" and outside of development limits, but also on a NPPF policy that said that outside built up limits, in open countryside, any design would have to be of an exceptional quality to justify a departure from the policy. It was on that basis that the Parish Council decided to write their objection. The case officer had also warned of supporting one off proposals such as this, owing to the danger of precedent.

A long discussion took place. The architect had no problem with the policy part of the objection, but he was disappointed with the statement "that the proposed dwelling is much too high and its design is completely alien to its rural surroundings". He was happy to make amendments to the height. He then asked what Councillors were happy to see on the site. Councillors gave their views on the property, which included concerns over the policy and the proposed height. Councillors also queried the septic tank and were told that effluent cannot be discharged outside of a property.

The Chair asked if there was a deadline for a response and the architect suggested 19<sup>th</sup> March 2013. It was agreed that the Parish Council would re-assess the earlier letter sent to SBC and

also the parishioner's letter of objection, and they would send an amended version to SBC; this would be done within seven days of the meeting.

**Action: The Clerk is to send both letters to Cllr Thomas for him to review.**

**Action: The Clerk is to send the draft letter to Councillors for their approval.**

**Action: The Clerk is to send the approved letter to the case officer at SBC (Helen Cooper) and a copy to Mr Wilson. (Complete)**

[Post meeting note: A response has been received from the case officer.]

Mr Wilson thanked Councillors for letting him attend the meeting. The Chair re-opened the meeting.

#### 4. **Minutes of Last Meeting**

The Chair asked for a proposition that the minutes of the February meeting be accepted as a true record; the proposition was put forward by Cllr Thomas, and unanimously agreed. The minutes were then signed by the Chair.

#### 5. **Matters Arising**

All actions from the previous meeting had been completed except for the following:

##### **Report from Borough Councillor – Locality Meeting**

###### Bishopstone Village Hall Contacts

Phil Ainley has taken on this task as he will be managing the Village Hall section of the website.

###### Brambling Cottage

The Chair has dropped a note in to the occupants and has yet to meet with them.

**Action: The Chair is to speak with the owners of the property.**

###### Bishopstone Pond & Island – Maintenance Responsibilities

The Clerk had contacted Swindon Commercial Services, who had given her their contact of Glasdon for the supplies. On phoning Glasdon they informed the Clerk that they could only supply the lifebelt and not signage.

[Post meeting note: The Clerk has since received an email from Arien Designs Ltd and has been liaising with them over the signage after receiving agreement from Councillors.]

###### Fly Tipping on White Hill

There had been additional fly tipping at White Hill on the left hand side of the road.

**Action: Cllr Cooke is to check the area to see if it is private.**

###### Stile at the Lynchetts

A Councillor asked if the stile into the Lynchetts could be altered to accommodate dogs.

**Action: Cllr Greenhalgh is to contact the staff of the farmer.**

#### 6. **Planning**

The following planning applications had been received:

- **S/13/0064SASM** – Erection of extension to garage – Batts Farm House, Church Row, Hinton Parva

Councillors had no objections to the above planning application.

- **S/LBC/13/0215SASM** – Insertion of a duct – Titchener's Cottage, High Street, Bishopstone. Councillors had no objections to the above planning application.

##### **Late Receipt of Planning Notifications**

The following plans had been received after the agenda had been issued:

- **S/13/0216KICO** – Erection of a triple bay garage and car port – Russley Park Cottage, Russley Park, Baydon

Councillors had no objections to the above planning application.

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- **S/LBC/13/0218HC** – Replacement of 1 no front window and 1 no bay window - Spring Cottage, Nell Hill, Bishopstone

Councillors had no objections to the above planning application.

#### **Conservation Area – Section 211 Notices:**

NONE

#### **GRANTED**

The following granted schedules had been received:

- **S/12/1782/SASM** - Erection of a single storey rear extension – The Coombs, Little Hinton Lane, Hinton Parva
- **S/12/1585RM** - Land to the North of Fortys Cottage, High Street, Bishopstone

#### **REFUSAL**

No refusal schedules had been received.

### **7. Reports from Borough Councillor**

#### Septic Tank

This item had been discussed earlier in the meeting.

#### Pond & Island

Cllr Bennett explained that various discussions had taken place with officials of SBC (Tim Price, Stephen Taylor and Gwilliam Lloyd.) The legal view expressed by Stephen Taylor is that SBC does not have responsibility for the dam. However, if there was to be a highways issue they would have to fix it. Tim Price will make time to talk to the Parish Council regarding a maintenance programme, but he does feel this is very low risk. If necessary Stephen Taylor will produce a note stating that SBC does not accept any responsibility.

It was noted that the Church Commissioners apparently have a water pipe that runs under the bed of the pond from the original spring and through the dam wall to the pump house at the mill.

Cllr Bennett had also discussed the situation with two lead members, Cllrs Keith Williams and Fionuala Foley, with Gwilliam Lloyd and Tim Price, who were not prepared to accept responsibility, but may offer support, but on an unspecified level. He gave some examples for this. The Chair explained that the insurance company wanted to know whose responsibility it is from the point of view of public liability and he felt that it was the Parish Councils'. Cllr Bennett advised that Tim Price should be invited for a site visit.

**Action: The Chair is to draft a letter for Councillors' approval and invite Tim Price to a site visit for his advice.**

#### Budget

Cllr Bennett reported:

- The budget has been finalised. The mobile library was to be written off, but this has been put on hold for 18 months, to research another service.
- There have been general reductions in provisions. Jackie Moyles has joined finance and the person in charge of the Localities has left. The South Locality seems to have a high level of discussion, but never reports back. It appeared that there had not been any contact between Localities and Parish Councils.
- Streetsmart continue to offer adhoc services on top of the normal ones, but there has not been a definitive statement as yet.
- Swindon Commercial Services are currently looking at rearranging a lot of contracts.

#### Police and Crime Panel

Cllr Bennett reported:

- He has spent a great deal of time with the Police and Crime Panel; he noted from the minutes that the Community Speed Watch initiative for the Parish had been abandoned – this was because of the requirements of the documentation.
- The new Police & Crime Commissioner will be pushing volunteering very hard. A lot more will be coming back from this panel and Cllr Bennett is happy to take anything back to it.
- The Commissioner is endeavouring to go to all localities and all area boards across Wiltshire. The draft of the Beating Crime Plan for the next 4 years has been completed.

The Chair informed Cllr Bennett that the Parish Council have invited Inspector Saunders to a Parish Council meeting.

## 8. Reports from Sub Committees

### Bishopstone Pond & Island – Maintenance Responsibilities

This item had been covered in item 7.

### Neighbourhood Planning

Cllr Thomas reported that no action was required as yet on Neighbourhood Planning; the protocol was available on SBC website.

## 9. Main Points

### Local Plan (Wanborough Working Party)

The Chair informed Councillors that the next meeting was to take place on 13<sup>th</sup> March 2013. However, the venue had been changed to Hinton Parva Village Hall.

### The True Heart

Some new plans had been circulated via email. The architect had contacted Cllr Thomas, who explained that there was likely to be an objection in principle, owing to the comments made by the inspector at the last appeal. Cllr Thomas gave a summary of the reasons the last appeal was turned down. The owners had not made any attempt to market the property as a pub.

The Borough Councillor suggested that the Parish Council should put forward what they would like to see on the site. It was decided that the Parish Council should invite the applicant and/or architect to a meeting. The plans will be submitted after the Parish Council's feedback.

**Action: Cllr Thomas is to draft a response to the architect.**

### Rural Speed Management

The Chair had circulated a response from the project manager at SBC (Sam Turner) that day, who stated that the tarmacing of the verges of the western gateway will be carried out soon. He confirmed that the designers were looking at the eastern gateway, where there is an apparent incentive to speed through the gateway and a road narrows sign had not been provided.

It was reported that the give way sign has disappeared at the bottom of Hatchet Hill.

**Action: The Clerk is to report this to Streetsmart. (Complete).**

### Village website

Progress has been made on the website, as follows:

- a) The PCC portion will be managed by Jonathan Boon and Karen Jenkins.
- b) Phil Ainley will expand on the Village Hall portion of the website.
- c) Paul Williams, the village historian, will build a section on village history for the site.

Cllr Greenhalgh will ask for this item to be included on the agenda as necessary in future.

### Rural Broadband

Cllr Greenhalgh had been approached by a representative of Liddington Parish Council. They have agreed to work together to get broadband speeds improved in the villages, and they will also talk to other villages to see if they have similar needs. Funding is the problem. Councillors suggested that the local MP should be contacted.

The Clerk is to remind Cllr Bennett to contact Jim Caton and David Titcombe (manager) of SBC to invite them to a future Parish Council meeting. Cllr Greenhalgh will ask for this item to be included on the agenda as necessary.

**Action: The Clerk is to remind Cllr Bennett to contact Jim Caton and David Titcombe (line manager) of SBC to invite them to a future Parish Council meeting.**

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## 10. Accounts to be Paid

The following cheques were presented for approval:

- L D Drewett £20.09

The above expenses were approved for payment by Cllr Greenhalgh, seconded by Cllr Crisp and agreed unanimously.

## 11. Correspondence

The Chair then asked if Councillors wished to view any of the other correspondence. None did.

The Parish Council had received the annual letter from CPRE regarding the best kept village competition. Councillors were not interested in taking this forward.

## 12. Parishioners Feedback/Complaints

### Tree Quotes

The Clerk informed Councillors of the three quotes for the tree surgery required on the Island. It was decided to award the contract to Richard Polatch on this occasion, as his was the cheapest quotation.

**Action: The Clerk is to notify Mr Polatch and the other two contractors. (Complete)**

### Wall on Church Walk, Bishopstone

The Chair had forwarded an email from the Chair of the Parochial Church Council (Alan Taylor) in which he asked for the support of the Parish Council, in connection with their correspondence with the agents for the Church Commissioners. He explained that Church Walk is the property of the Church but responsibility for maintenance of the wall rests with the Church Commissioners. Cllr Greenhalgh provided some background on the problems to date for Councillors. It was agreed that the Parish Council should support the PCC with a letter to the agents (Strutt & Parker), a copy of which should be sent to the Conservation Officer at SBC (Liz Smith Gibbons). It was felt that the works would be covered under a Church faculty rather than a planning application.

**Action: The Chair is to draft a letter of support for Councillors' approval, with a copy to be sent to Liz Smith Gibbons. (Complete)**

### Road Conditions on Nell Hill and the Icknield Way

The Chair has spoken to the farmer and he is aware of the problem and will be taking charge of the situation.

A Councillor reported the condition of the surface of the road 100 yards after the end of the houses until it levels out by the cottages at the Ridgeway, on the escarpment, is appalling.

**Action: The Clerk is to report this to SBC.**

### Dead Tree

A Councillor reported a dead elm that was leaning out of the hedge at the bend at the end of New Road; this is becoming a danger for traffic.

**Action: The Clerk is to write to Eastbrook Farm Office. (Complete)**

[The tree has since been removed.]

### Fly tipping

A Councillor reported that tyres had been tipped from the end of New Road towards Bourton; this carries on all the way through to Bourton.

**Action: The Clerk is to report this to Streetsmart. (Complete)**

### Parish Times

Councillors felt there should be an article included in the Parish Times regarding the apple trees.

**Action: Cllrs McGuigan and Cooke are to provide an article for the Parish Times. (Complete)**

### Green Lane

The potholes in Green Lane are getting worse and Cllr Cooke would like to know who has to maintain the lane.

**Action: The Clerk is to forward the last email to Cllr Cooke for his information.  
(Complete)**

Fly Tipping at White Hill

A Councillor reported some tyres and wheels had been tipped at the top of White Hill.

**Action: The Clerk is to report this to Streetsmart. (Complete)**

Camera

It was agreed to explore the concept of purchasing a battery operated surveillance camera to try to identify those throwing rubbish onto the verges of roads.

**Action: Cllr Crisp is to check whether it will be legal to use the camera to identify offenders.**

**Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting, will take place on Monday 8 April 2013 at Bishopstone Village Hall, starting at 19:30 pm.

**Action: Apologies to the Clerk before the meeting.**

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