# BISHOPSTONE PARISH COUNCIL

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting**

**held at 7:30 p.m.**

**on Monday 2 March 2020**

**at Hinton Parva Village Hall**

**Those Present:** Lesley Drewett (Clerk), Val Brodin (Chair), Nigel Crisp, Stuart McGuigan, Tom Green, Julian Cooke, Douglas Stevens, Gill May, Cllr Gary Sumner.

1. **Public Question Time**

One member of the public was in attendance, and the Chair invited her to speak. The parishioner was upset about a letter received from SBC enforcement on 14th February 2020 concerning a possible breach of conditions from their planning application for a garage. The parishioner noted that this issue had been raised at the Parish Council’s October meeting and wondered why they had not been notified earlier and given a chance to respond sooner.

It was explained that the minutes of Parish Council meetings are posted on noticeboards and the website as soon as they are ratified, and they are the means of informing the public about proceedings. It was further explained that when complaints such as this are received and appear to have substance, the issue is passed to the professionals at SBC. Cllr Sumner noted that he had received several reminders from the Parish Council about this matter. He apologised for the delay in sending the enforcement officer’s letter, explaining that this was due to her excessive workload but she has now been provided with assistance and is catching up on the backlog. The Clerk confirmed she had now received notification from SBC that the issues had been resolved other than the rendering, which the parishioner confirmed would be completed when the weather conditions permit.

The parishioner asked what had happened to the wooden fingerpost at Hinton Springs, and was informed that it is currently being repaired along with the post from West End Lane.

The Chair thanked the parishioner for attending and opened the meeting.

1. **Approved Apologies**

Andy Greenhalgh, Ian Thomas (Vice Chair).

1. **Declarations of Interest**

There were no declarations of interest.

1. **Minutes of Last Meeting**

The Chair asked for a proposal that the February meeting be accepted as a true record. The proposal was made by Cllr McGuigan and unanimously agreed. The minutes were then signed by the Chair.

1. **Matters Arising**

All actions from the previous meeting had been completed except:

 Churchyard Maintenance

Cllr Stevens explained that the PCC had chosen to re-appoint Andy Stone as his was the most competitive and cheapest quote of £4,150 with 3% index linked inclusive of VAT. He informed Cllrs that as well as the specification Andy works to, he also carries out work that is not invoiced. Cllr Crisp then advised councillors that they needed to decide whether the Parish Council should continue to contribute to the maintenance of the three Churchyards and if so, the amount of the contribution. The Parish Council currently contributes £3,700.00.

Questions were asked about the PCC’s income and expenditure, noting that the PCC receives regular donations from church members. Cllr Crisp explained that the PCC does not publish its accounts in the transparent way that the Parish Council does. Cllr Stevens confirmed that the accounts can be viewed at the PCC’s AGM. The Clerk reminded councillors that the Parish Council receives a grant of £1,152.58 from SBC to maintain the closed churchyards.

Cllrs were anxious to ascertain whether a contribution from the Parish Council would be an appropriate use of public funds and decided that the PCC should be asked to explain its income and expenditure. Cllr Crisp proposed that the Parish Council commit to paying the grant money received from SBC, pending a decision on whether to contribute further funds. This was unanimously agreed.

**Action: The Clerk was asked to place this item onto the March agenda.**

**Action: Cllr Stevens is to invite Alan Taylor to the meeting.**

75th Anniversary of V E Day on 8 May 2020

The Village Hall Committee in Hinton Parva has agreed to support an activity to acknowledge this important date. As a starting point, the Chair has acquired a photograph of the Home Guard in the Parish between 1940-1944, with names. Cllrs congratulated the Chair on her work to date.

**Action: The Clerk was asked to remove this item from the agenda.**

Village Clean Up

This had been well co-ordinated. Huge amounts of rubbish were collected in both villages and removed by SBC. The Chair and Cllr Crisp had noted that Hinton Parva seemed much cleaner than in the past, which they suspected was a result of two young residents carrying out regular litter picking as community service for their Duke of Edinburgh’s Award. Cllr Green had the same perception in Bishopstone, which he attributed to the regular efforts of one particular resident, which had enabled volunteers on the day to range further afield. The Clerk was asked to minute the Parish Council’s grateful thanks to those that attended on 1st March and those who put in such efforts year round.

1. **Planning**
* **S/OUT/20/0160 -** Outline application for up to 370no dwellings and a mixed use local centre of up to 1,500sqm floor space (use classes A1/A2/A3/A4/A5 and D1- Access not reserved – Land at Foxbridge Village, New Eastern Villages, Wanborough Road, Wanborough

Cllr Sumner advised Cllrs of the location and explained that a primary school is a required element of the Foxbridge development, which is in two halves, but no school is shown on the plan for this first phase. Councillors discussed the potential traffic impact on the parish if a school is not provided at Foxbridge and agreed to press for one to be included.

**Action: Cllr Green is to DRAFT a response for Cllrs approval by 9/3/20. (Complete)**

**Action: The Clerk is to send the response to SBC.**

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| **PENDING DETERMINATION** |

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**NONE**

**APPEAL**

* **APP/U3935/W/19/3240061 –** Demolition of The Chalet & erection of 1no dwelling & associated works – The Chalet, Church Row, Hinton Parva

The applicant’s appeal has been dismissed but the Clerk has not received written notification. Cllrs welcomed the inspector’s decision.

**OTHER ISSUES**

The following application arrived after the agenda had been issued:

* S/LBC/20/0223 – Installation of replacement windows – Titcheners Cottage, High Street, Bishopstone

Cllrs had no objections subject to the views of the Conservation Officer.

**Action: The Clerk is to write to SBC.**

**TREES**

**S/TWC/20/0224/LAND** – Work to trees in a Conservation Area – Harlestone House, Mount Pleasant, Bishopstone

**GRANTED**

**NONE**

**REFUSAL**

**NONE**

**Trees**

1. **Report from Borough Council**

**Junction 15** - Cllr Sumner reported that funding for junction 15 is 99% agreed. Construction will start in June. The project has been re-costed from £11m to £26m, but savings are being made by closing Day House Lane to motor vehicles, removing the need to rebuild the bridge. The LEP funding will provide £3 million and SBC are contributing £4.8 million because of the importance of this scheme to the realisation of the NEV. The build programme will go beyond the April 20/21 spend deadline but will use public money first, then borrowed money.

**Traffic Calming** - Cllr Sumner explained the plans to mitigate the impact on the villages of traffic generated by the New Eastern Villages. Some funds will be made available from the NEV, including the Redlands application, and a traffic calming scheme has been proposed, initially prioritising Wanborough but also from Bishopstone and Hinton Parva into Swindon. As further funds become available, Cllr Sumner expected the scheme would be enlarged to deter traffic heading up Pack Hill towards this Parish. Cllrs asked whether Hinton and Bishopstone would benefit from any traffic calming investment and were assured that the villages had been mentioned in the original background plans as being in need of attention. The NEV team from SBC are in charge of the planning and there will be opportunities to lobby for funds.

**Hinton Septic Tank** - Cllr Sumner had been asked by SBC about the upkeep of the ground surrounding Hinton Parva Septic Tank. Cllr Crisp explained that SBC use a contractor from Salisbury to carry out the work. The Parish Council had offered to include the work on the Lengthman’s contract, and a quote had been submitted to SBC who had responded that they preferred their current approach. Cllrs noted that the area was poorly maintained, and repeated the PC’s previous offer.

Cllr Sumner has been asked by SBC to contact homes connected to the tank to remind residents that nappies and wet wipes should not be put down toilets as it causes severe problems.

**Action: Cllr Crisp is to get a quote from the Lengthman and forward it to Cllr Sumner for SBC’s consideration.**

**Policing issues** - Cllr Sumner had reported to the police that drugs were being used, including needles being discarded, around Charlbury Hill but had received no response since February. He has also been in touch with the newspaper. Councillors noted that they have repeatedly been told that community policing relies on local intelligence, but it seems that local intelligence is seldom followed through. Cllrs commented that data from Community Speed Watch is also a good resource that seems seldom followed through, though it is acknowledged that there have been staffing challenges.

**Collapsed banks and ditches** – Cllr Sumner was due to meet with Paul Page and the owner of Hinton Manor, who had reported a problem with a ditch. The Chair noted that the Parish Council had reported a collapsed bank to the stream in Short Drove, which might perhaps be examined at the same visit. A map showing the location had been provided.

**Action: The Clerk is to send the photograph showing the location at Short Drove to Cllr Sumner. (Complete)**

**The Chalet** - Cllr Crisp asked Cllr Sumner if he had been able to ascertain whether the owners of The Chalet were paying Council Tax. Cllr Sumner replied that he had received an email from Andy Stevens, Head of Revenues and Benefits, stating that he would ask the valuations officer to look into this.

**Action: Cllr Sumner is to feedback to Cllr Crisp.**

**The City** - The Clerk asked Cllr Sumner what was happening with regard to the drainage problem at The City, the second tranche of letters having been sent by SBC. Cllr Sumner has asked Sam Howell to progress the situation owing to the length of time it is taking to resolve the issue.

[Post meeting note: Emails and photographs have been received and the issue is being progressed with Cllr Sumner and Paul Page.]

The Chair thanked Cllr Sumner for responding to a parishioner’s recent emails on this matter.

1. **Key Responsibility Area Updates**

Finance – No report to make.

Footpaths & Highways – The culvert at bottom of New Town Lane is completely blocked.

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

Pond & Island Management Committee – The Clerk was asked to minute the Parish Council’s thanks to those who attended the clean up event.

Hinton Parva Village Hall - No report to make.

Bishopstone Village Hall - No report to make.

Hinton Parva Charities - No report to make.

Bishopstone United Charities - No report to make.

Trees – Cllr Cooke reported that an Ash tree in a field by Body Horse Hill has been inspected, has Ash dieback and will have to be removed. The Chair informed Cllr Cooke about an Oak Tree in Hinton Parva that has lost a substantial bough.

Russley Park Liaison - No report to make.

Planning - No report to make.

Website/IT – No report to make.

**Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)** – The Chair reported that two applications had been received and both candidates had been interviewed by Cllrs Crisp and Brodin. The Chair proposed the appointment of Jaine Blackman as Clerk and RFO, subject to a three month probationary period, commencing immediately to overlap with and allow for an effective handover with the outgoing Clerk. Cllrs unanimously agreed. Cllr Crisp outlined the proposed simplified terms and conditions of employment, which included a fixed monthly salary instead of the current hourly pay arrangement.

 It was agreed that Cllr Crisp would assist with the transfer of data from the current Clerk’s computer to the new Clerk, and Cllr Brodin would send a letter of offer and organise the contractual details.

1. **West End Lane Junction**

It was agreed that this item was no longer needed on the agenda.

**Action: The Clerk is to remove this item from the agenda. (Complete)**

1. **Hinton Parva Red Phone Box**

SBC have supported keeping the phone box. BT will now decide what they wish to do.

1. **Police Commissioner’s visit – matters to be raised**

A long discussion took place. Councillors decided to ask the Police Commissioner to make firm undertakings on three items of importance to the villages:

* Increased police presence in the villages, for example in support of Community Speed Watch
* Nightly visits to Charlbury Tump
* Engagement with the school, for example through participation in assemblies or other visits
1. **Local Plan**

A meeting had taken place between the Chair, Vice Chair and Cllr Sumner following the last meeting. Cllr Sumner would not support the Parish Council’s view that the site at The Forty is fundamentally unsuitable for development. He would instead press for a smaller number of dwellings.

1. **Pond & Island**

This item was deferred until a future meeting.

1. **GDPR**

This item is to be kept on the agenda. There have been no issues.

1. **Community Safety**

The Chair had been unable to attend the last Community Safety Forum but will bring back any issues once she has the minutes. She noted that policing strategies explained at the forum regarding drugs and preventing the exploitation of children had clearly been implemented as planned and with good effect.

1. **Lengthman Works**

The Clerk queried the receipt of two invoices from the Lengthman. On checking these against the spreadsheet she is happy they do need paying. Cllr Crisp approved so long as there was only one invoice per month.

[Post meeting note: Only 1 invoice needed payment invoice 1613 arrived late and had been paid in February.]

1. **Accounts to be paid:**
* See Appendix 1 The amounts shown in Appendix 1 of the Agenda were presented for approval. The Clerk’s salary and timesheet had been sent to the Chair of the Finance Sub-Committee for checking before the agenda had been issued. The Lengthman had presented his invoice after the meeting but this has already been agreed by Cllrs as a monthly payment.

Cllr Crisp proposed that the accounts were paid, this was seconded by Cllr Cooke and agreed unanimously by those present.

1. **Correspondence**

The Chair asked Cllrs if they wished to view any correspondence; none did.

1. **Parishioners Feedback/Complaints**

The Clerk had forwarded an email from a parishioner with regard to an old galvanised bucket screwed onto a telegraph pole outside of the True Heart which was being used as a dog bin. Cllrs advised that this had been added to the Lengthman’s duties some time ago.

**Action: The Clerk is to remind the Lengthman about this bin. (Complete)**

1. **Date of Next Meeting**

The next meeting is due to take place on Monday 6th April 2020 at Bishopstone Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 10:28 pm.