

Sibford Gower Parish Council
Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held in Sibford Gower Endowed Primary School on 1st May 2012

Present

Parish Cllrs Mrs Gilian Soden, Peter Abbott, Roger Alder, Oswyn Murray (Chairman), and Alan Parkin.

County and District Councillor George Reynolds, eight Local Electors and the Clerk.

Election of Chairman and Vice Chairman

Proposed by Cllr Alan Parkin and seconded by Cllr Peter Abbott, it was resolved that Cllr Oswyn Murray be re-elected as Chairman.

Proposed by Cllr Gilian Soden and seconded by Cllr Roger Alder, it was resolved that Cllr Peter Abbott be re-elected as Vice Chairman.

Minutes

It was proposed by Cllr Gilian Soden and seconded by Cllr Peter Abbott that the Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 21st March 2012 be approved as a correct record and they were then signed by the Chairman.

Matters Arising

There were no matters arising which were not referred to later in the Meeting.

Chairman's Report

There was nothing specific that the Chairman wished to say as he would comment later on matters within the agenda. However, he referred to Bishops End, Burdrop (formerly The Bishop Blaize) where an appeal had been made to the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government by the owners in respect of an Alleged Breach of Planning Control (Without planning permission, the material change of use of the land from a public house (Use Class A4) to a residential dwelling house (Use Class C3). Cherwell District Council wrote to each resident who had previously expressed a view, whatever that view may be, informing that if they would like their views taken into account by the Inspector when determining the appeal they should write to The Planning Inspectorate, 3/26 Wing, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol, BS1 6PN before Tuesday, 22nd May 2012. The Appeal References are APP/C3105/C/12/2170904 & APP/C3105/C/12/2170905. The Chairman stressed that these views should not be sent to Cherwell District Council at Bodicote House.

Sibfords Community Plan

Mrs Sue Mattinson gave an update as to the progress of the Sibfords Community Plan and a Progress Report dated 1st May 2012 will be received by all residents. It sets out the current positions with regard to the Working Groups, the Questionnaire, New Clubs Night and the ongoing Timetable.

The Chairman thanked her for the Report and in doing so commented on the viability of the moving on from a Community Plan to a Neighbourhood Plan which would involve quite a considerable expense. From information gained at a recent ORCC Meeting it appears that having just a Community Plan is quite adequate for a small village such as ours.

Broadband

Mr Paul Hobson gave an update as to how matters currently stand. So far, 450 users have expressed support for a move to have our exchange area upgraded to Superfast Broadband. The chairman reported on a telephone conversation with Lisa Michelson, the officer responsible for delivery at Oxon County Council (see Appendix). He also reported that the PCC of Swalcliffe had agreed to support the initiative

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Clerk's Report

With regard to the thoughts of a merger of the Ferris and the Gower Parish Councils, the Clerk had been advised that the Ferris Council prefers to await the introduction of the Community Plan when the matter will be considered.

Affordable Housing: The Parish Council Progress Report had been received from Oxfordshire Rural Community Council and reference is made to a possible Rural Exception site in Hook Norton Road, Sibford Ferris. Discussions with the land owner are ongoing.

Financial Matters

Receipts and Payments Account for the Financial Year ended 31st March 2012

Proposed by Cllr Alan Parkin and seconded by Cllr Peter Abbott, it was resolved that these be duly approved by the Parish Council. The Independent Examination had been carried out by Mr David Soden to whom thanks were extended.

Proposed by Cllr Alan Parkin and seconded by Cllr Peter Abbott, it was resolved that the undermentioned Annual Return to the External Auditor be approved:-

Section 1. Accounting Statements

Section 2. Annual Governance Statement

Section 4. Annual Internal Audit Report: The Internal Audit had been carried out by Mr David Soden to whom grateful thanks were expressed.

Proposed by Cllr Peter Abbott and seconded by Cllr Gilian Soden, it was resolved that the following payments be made:-

Cheque No. 150 £30.00 dated 24.03.12 made payable to ORCC being the cost of annual membership (Retrospectively)

Cheque No. 151 £396.91 dated 13.04.12 made payable to AON being the cost of the annual premium for Insurance for y/e 31.05.13 (Retrospectively)

Planning Matters

Since the previous Meeting, no planning applications or decisions had been received.

Highway Matters

On 19th April the Clerk had a site meeting with Mr Ralph Grant with regard to maintenance work due to be started on the footpaths adjacent to the road from Burdrop to Sibford Ferris (Mannings Hill). The matter of making them suitable for mobility vehicles was discussed. Mr Grant undertook to see what might be done and a lot depends upon the financial constraints under which his department works.

Footpath Matters

No matters were raised.

The Queen's Jubilee Celebrations

Notification had been received from Cherwell District Council that a grant of £400 had been awarded to the Parish Council to assist with the cost of the Queen's Diamond Jubilee Celebrations and these monies will be passed over, in due course, to Sibford Village Hall.

Proposed by Cllr Peter Abbott and seconded by Cllr Oswyn Murray, it was resolved that a Grant of £500 (cheque No.152) should be made to Sibford Village Hall as a contribution towards the expenditure to be incurred in connection with events being organised for the Golden Jubilee Celebrations for the enjoyment of residents.

Annual Parish Meeting

This will take place on 25th May starting at 7.30pm in the hall of Sibford Gower Endowed Primary School. Reports will be received from local organisations and there will be a police presence and (still to be confirmed) a member of the Oxfordshire Highways Team.

Annual Spring Clean

Cllr Peter Abbott confirmed that all is prepared for the event on Saturday, 5th May which has been publicised in the Sibford Scene and on the notice boards. Contingency plans are to be made in the event of bad weather.

Village Pond

In view of the shortage of water in the pond caused by the lack of rain, the number of fish has been reduced by approximately a half by transfer to one of the ponds of a local resident at his invitation.

On 19th April, by arrangement, the pond was visited by Mr Ralph Grant of Oxfordshire Highways who met with the Chairman and the Clerk to discuss the movement of part of the pond wall apparently caused by the pressure of heavy vehicles entering and leaving the nearby farm. The condition of that part of the road requires attention with regard to resurfacing. Mr Grant undertook to look into the situation and he will report to the Parish Council as soon as possible.

Public Participation

A local resident at the Meeting raised the matter of potholes in Hawkes Lande and the poor condition of the road leading to the Doctors' Surgery. The Clerk was instructed to refer the situation to Oxfordshire Highways.

Another resident at the Meeting asked where the responsibility of cutting a hedge at High Meadow lay and District Councillor George Reynolds advised that the Housing Association which owns the properties involved be approached.

The subject of blocked gullies in Acre Ditch was the subject of another complaint and, here again, the Clerk was instructed to refer to Oxfordshire Highways.

Any other Matters

No matters were raised.

Date of Next Meeting

The next Meeting will be on Wednesday, 4th July 2012 starting at 8pm in the Staff Room of Sibford Gower Endowed Primary School.

There being no further business to discuss, the Chairman thanked all present for attending and closed the Meeting at 9.25 pm.

Appx Swalcliffe Exchange Broadband Users Group

Report on telephone conversation 19.4.2012 with Lisa Michelson, in charge of Oxon broadband strategy, tel 01865-815673.

Our last previous contact was 23rd Jan 2012, when she promised to get back in touch with me, but failed to do so, because the information remains much as it was then. This is the situation:

Commercial companies are expected to roll out next generation access at 24mbps to 72% of the county, leaving a gap of 38%. The Oxon CC has funding of £14m to help close this gap, and expects to raise coverage to 90%.

This will be done by competitive tender to telecom companies, and it is not possible to say which exchanges or areas will be left out in the end, because that will depend on the exact nature of the contract entered into. However the OCC is unlikely to accept tenders that leave out whole areas of the county: more likely is specific scattered exchanges that for one reason or another are especially expensive to upgrade. Therefore we cannot know if the Swalcliffe area will be included until the final agreement of tenders.

One important factor for the county is the number of public entities in an area, especially primary schools, because the Oxon community network they rely on at present will be abandoned. Therefore it is important for our group especially to contact all primary head teachers on the Swalcliffe exchange (and any other OCC public bodies), and list them in our returns in a separate public authority category.

Even beyond these initiatives the aim of the OCC is one way or another to provide a minimum 2mbps.

Other sources of funding

The Deddington initiative with BT announced last week is completely separate from all this: they won a national competition as a trial area. Lucky them.

Cotswolds Broadband has put together a bid for DEFRA funding, centred on Chipping Norton. This is based on fibre optic cable. The DEFRA process (which aims to cover the areas where neither private initiative nor local authority funding helps) is fiendishly complex, but Lisa is sending me info on this which I will share. She is also about to discuss their bid with the Chipping Norton group: apparently they are interested in expanding their service. If we want to pursue DEFRA funding we should talk first with this group.

The DEFRA next round occurs officially in May, but they are in chaos, and we cannot anyway be ready for that deadline I guess – nor given the possibility of still being included in the OCC scheme does it seem very sensible for us to proceed far in this direction.

Lisa said that our activity in collecting user info, and dividing it between three categories of public, business and private will be very helpful for the OCC tender process, and my guess is if we can present it properly might be used as a model and so push us up the attention ladder. So we need to continue to gather info and make it as complete as possible. Lisa will let us know when to send it in.

This is all the info I have at present, but we should clearly push ahead as fast as possible in gathering info. If there are any obvious gaps on which I can help, please let me know.

Oswyn Murray, Chairman of Sibford Gower PC

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copies to the Swalcliffe UG coordinators

SG Parish Council

SF Parish Council

Other PCs: Swalcliffe, Epwell, Tadmarton

any others?



Sibfords Community Plan

Progress Report

May 1st 2012

- **WORKING GROUPS:** The six Working Groups are continuing with their work. The Housing and Environment Groups have completed their reports and findings arising from the Questionnaire analysis. The final reports from the remaining four Groups are scheduled to be submitted to the next Steering Group Meeting on 9th May. Their findings and potential actions and opportunities will be discussed by the Steering Group and subsequently included in the Final Community Plan report.
- **QUESTIONNAIRE:** The responses received from the Questionnaire have been made available on the Sibfords website plus the 'headlines' and range of comments received on the final Open Questions at the end of the Questionnaire. The 'headlines for each of the topics will be added in due course once all the Working Groups have submitted their reports.
- **NEW CLUBS NIGHT:** The New Clubs Night was held on Tuesday April 17th. The purpose of the event was to provide an opportunity for the community to get together and set up the new clubs that had received a high level of responses and interest in the Questionnaire. Attendance at the event was low, however, (14 people) and only the Walking Club and Drama Group received interest, albeit still with fairly low numbers. Other opportunities will be sought in the future to encourage people to set up these Clubs.
- **TIMETABLE** The outline programme for the development of the Final Community Plan is broadly on target. It is anticipated that the first draft of the Community Plan will now be available in early / mid-June after which it will be made available for review and consultation by the Parish Councils and also ORCC, CDC and OCC. Consultation with the Sibford's community is important and will be available on the village website. Alternatively, on request, it can be sent to people's e-mail address. A limited number of hard copies will be made available for those unable to access the document online. Following Final Approval and a public meeting, it is anticipated that the document will be published in July. The Community Plan will include an Action Plan setting out future actions, targets and ambitions linked to the principal topics that the Working Groups have been examining. In particular the Action Plan will enable future monitoring of progress of the various actions and opportunities that have been identified.