

# Sibford Gower Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on **Wednesday 15<sup>th</sup> November 2023** at **7pm** in Sibford Village Hall, Sibford Gower

Present: Cllr Jackie Noquet (Chairman), Cllr Geoff Noquet, Cllr James Garstin, Cllr Alan Berks, Cllr Andrew Downes.

In attendance: 2 members of the public, Clerk.

**64. Public participation session** – A parishioner has contacted the Parish Council (PC) looking for help with getting to hospital. Cllr J Noquet advised that there is a Volunteer Driver Service based in Banbury who can be contacted on [info@volunteerdriverservice.org.uk](mailto:info@volunteerdriverservice.org.uk) or 0300 3030 125. **Clerk to put details of the service in the Sibford Scene.**

## Business

**65. Apologies for absence** – None.

**66. Members' declarations of interest for items on the agenda** – None.

**67. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council (PC) meeting held on 20<sup>th</sup> September 2023** – The minutes were proposed, agreed, and duly signed.

### **68. Outstanding matters/actions from previous meetings**

- i. Update re meeting with Highways re the bollards outside the doctors' surgery – Highways have advised that they will not spend on items that are purely for verge protection. It was noted that the bollards are not just about verge protection and there is a bigger health and safety impact in that when cars park on the verge it makes the path muddy and slippery for pedestrians. **Cllr J Noquet to go back to Highways re the health and safety issue to see if this changes their stance on getting the bollards replaced.**
- ii. Update re discussion with the school and Highways regarding the metal railings at the school – The barrier that has been damaged is going to be replaced and there will be an additional barrier put in place next to it. At the bottom of the mound they are going to put some stakes in the ground to stop the children being able to stand there on the verge. Highways are hoping this work will be done before the end of the year along with repainting the road markings. **Cllr J Noquet to ask Highways if the PC can have details of their plan to ensure there has not been any misunderstanding about what is required.**
- iii. Update re meeting with parishioners regarding parking problems in the Bonds End Lane and Main Street area of the village – The meeting was well attended and good discussions were held about what the issues are and all suggestions for solutions were recorded. The next step is to draw up a plan based on some of those suggestions. It may not be possible to implement all of the suggestions. **Cllrs Garstin and Berks will put together a proposal for the Highways related solutions to bring to the next meeting and put a note in the Sibford Scene and on Next Door to ask for volunteers to pick up and develop some of the other possible solutions.**

### **69. Town Estates Charity (TEC) nominee**

- i) Nomination to replace Jean Scouse – It was proposed and agreed to nominate Roger Mallows as the TEC nominee. **Cllr Berks to inform the TEC of the nominee. Cllr Berks to check with the TEC when the next vacancy is coming up as it is thought there was a member who was planning on standing down in the spring of 2024.**
- ii) Proposal to re-nominate Joan Broady for another term of office – Proposed and agreed.

**70. Feedback from District/County Councillors** – None.

**71. Feedback from councillors re training sessions attended** – Cllr J Noquet has attended training on the Code of Conduct, and planning. **Cllr J Noquet will forward the slides from the planning training to the full council.**

## Assets and services

- 72. Update re enforcement of Burial Ground Regulations** – One of the plots still has items on it that are causing problems with mowing but it was felt that a personal approach may be better than a formal letter in the first instance. **Cllr J Noquet to contact the next of kin to ask them to move the items to ensure mowing can still take place.** It was also agreed that the regulations should be updated to include the following statements:
- items should be placed on burial plots in such a way that they do not prevent maintenance of the burial ground such as mowing and strimming
  - should any items placed on burial plots prevent maintenance by the PC, the PC reserves the right to remove the items.
- Clerk to arrange update of the regulations.**
- 73. Proposal to get a path cut through the Wildflower Area in the Burial Ground at the beginning of the new grass cutting season in 2024** – It was agreed not to go ahead with this at the moment to allow the wildflower area to get established.
- 74. Discussion re responsibility for tree management in the Churchyard** – No longer required as the particular tree issue seems to have been resolved.

## Finance

- 75. Bank balances as at 09.11.23 - £570.34 and £16,907.79** – Cllr Garstin confirmed the balances stated are correct.
- 76. Proposal to make the annual grant of £400 to Sibford Village Hall and £200 to the Sibford Scene** – Proposed and agreed.
- 77. Proposal to make a contribution of up to £120 towards a replacement laptop for the Clerk. The laptop will not be an asset of Sibford Gower Parish Council as the cost is shared with 8 other councils** – Proposed and agreed.
- 78. To agree the budget and resulting precept for the 2024-25 financial year** – It was proposed and agreed to set a budget of £14,097.50 resulting in a precept of £9,350 with the difference being funded by income and surplus from 2023-24. Due to costs increasing it is becoming more difficult to prevent rises in the precept so it was agreed to ask the TEC if they would consider contributing 75% of the costs of managing the Millennium Field. It was also agreed to take the regular donations of £400 to the Village Hall and £200 to the Sibford Scene out of the budget for the 2024-25 financial year in order to maintain the existing precept and ask the TEC later in the year if they could make these donations in future as these are the kind of causes the TEC is set up to support and would reduce funds needed from the taxpayer. **Clerk to submit precept demand.**
- 79. To note and approve the following payments and receipts since the last meeting:**

**Payments:** Proposed and agreed.

|          |                        |  |         |
|----------|------------------------|--|---------|
| 26.09.23 | Royal British Legion   | Poppy Wreath                                   | £25.00  |
| 26.09.23 | Kirsty Buttle          | Salary and office Sep                          | £313.06 |
| 26.09.23 | HMRC                   | Tax Sep  | £38.20  |
| 29.09.23 | NEST                   | Pension Sep                                    | £19.84  |
| 31.10.23 | Lovesey Rural Services | Millennium field paths mowing 4th and 21st Sep | £144.00 |
| 31.10.23 | OALC                   | Chairmanship Training                          | £132.00 |
| 31.10.23 | OALC                   | Planning training                              | £66.00  |
| 31.10.23 | Thomas Fox Landscaping | Mowing of churchyard 5th Oct                   | £143.14 |
| 31.10.23 | Thomas Fox Landscaping | Mowing of churchyard 7th Sep                   | £143.14 |
| 31.10.23 | Kirsty Buttle          | Salary and office October                      | £313.06 |
| 31.10.23 | HMRC                   | Tax October                                    | £38.20  |
| 31.10.23 | NEST                   | Pension October                                | £19.84  |

**Receipts:** Noted.

|          |               |            |         |
|----------|---------------|------------|---------|
| 09.10.23 | R Locke & Son | Burial fee | £203.00 |
|----------|---------------|------------|---------|

|          |        |          |        |
|----------|--------|----------|--------|
| 09.10.23 | Lloyds | Interest | £16.26 |
| 09.11.23 | Lloyds | Interest | £19.16 |

**Invoices to be paid:** Proposed and agreed.

|                        |                               |         |
|------------------------|-------------------------------|---------|
| Lovesey Rural Services | Millennium Field mowing 23/10 | £336.00 |
| Sibford Village Hall   | Hall hire 17th Oct            | £16.50  |
| Kirsty Buttle          | Salary November and back pay  | £439.59 |
| HMRC                   | Tax November                  | £70.40  |
| NEST                   | Pension November              | £29.11  |
| Kirsty Buttle          | Paper                         | £25.99  |

## Planning

### 80. Planning applications received

**23/02377/F - Mawles Farm, Pound Lane, Sibford Gower.** Build a timber frame building within the existing pole barn building. This will make a two bay garage, shed and boiler room, ancillary to the main house. Home office, storage and mezzanine to the first floor. **Comment only - The Parish Council has some concerns about this application, mainly in relation to its non-compliance with the previously approved planning permission. A previous planning application to replace the steel barn with an additional dwelling was refused. Planning permission was given on the basis that the steel barn would be removed and replaced with a smaller, ancillary building. The new ancillary building will now be as big as the old barn which should have been removed. (Response made using delegated powers).**

### 81. Planning decisions received

**23/02368/F - Longview, Pound Lane, Sibford Gower.** Demolition of existing dwelling and erection of replacement dwelling and outbuildings. **Approved.**

### 82. Planning appeal received

**APP/C3105/W/23/3321715 - The Pheasant Pluckers Inn, Burdrop.** RETROSPECTIVE - Change of Use of public house (Sui Generis) to hotel/bed and breakfast (Class C1). **Sibford Gower Parish Council cannot support this appeal for the following reasons:**

1. The original application was not published with sufficient information to be able to form a considered view of the impact of the change. Specifically, there was no Design and Access Statement submitted with the application. There was also no meaningful business plan or description of how the building will be used differently.
2. The original application was not live on the planning portal for long enough for parishioners to consider the changes being requested and form a response. The removal of the application from the portal indicated that there was no live planning application to respond to, so we and parishioners assumed this was no longer a live application.
3. The additional information now provided for the appeal (dated May 2023) was not available at the point of the original application. Therefore, we do not believe it should be considered for the appeal, since parishioners did not have the chance to review and comment on it. The justifications made in the additional information provided are not supported with any meaningful data or figures, particularly where it refers to the impact on the other pub in the village.
4. There remains significant opposition in the village to change of use of these premises. Therefore, in the event that a new and complete application is submitted, a community meeting will need to be held to ensure all views are considered before making a formal response on behalf of the Parish Council. (Response made using delegated powers).

**83. Concerns raised about work having taken place that may require planning permission at The New Rectory, Acre Ditch** – It is believed that the property owner will be putting in an application for discharge of conditions and will include the shed in their application. **Clerk to contact planning enforcement to advise them that the shed has been put in and ask them if it requires planning permission.**

**84. Consideration of the process for responding to planning applications** – Cllr G Noquet raised concerns that he believes the PC did not follow the process correctly when responding to the recent appeal on his property and felt that the response submitted was personal rather than a fair response to the application submitted.

A member of the public left the meeting at 8:52pm.

Cllr Geoffrey Noquet left the meeting at 8:55pm.

The remaining councillors discussed the process followed and agreed that nothing improper had happened in relation to the process used to respond to this appeal and that the same process had been used as that for all other planning applications responded to between meetings using delegated powers. It was agreed that no changes should be made to the process going forward. Councillors were reminded of the process as follows:

- Clerk to e-mail details of the application to all councillors who do not have an interest in the planning application that would require them to be recused. Clerk to inform the councillors if the deadline for response means that the response will be made using delegated powers unless the councillors decide to call an extraordinary meeting or request an extension to respond from Cherwell District Council.
- Councillors to inform the Clerk asap if they feel a meeting should be held to discuss the application.
- Councillors to respond to the Clerk copying in all other councillors who can vote on the application providing their comments
- Clerk to put together a response based on the information provided by councillors (please note the clerk is not required to obtain responses from all councillors in order to submit a response although it is preferred that all councillors respond to ensure the Clerk has access to as much information as possible in order to make a decision) and submit to CDC before the agreed deadline.

**Community**

- 85. **Update re Community Speedwatch** – Cllr Downes confirmed that Speedwatch will not be going ahead in the parish.
- 86. **Draft Cherwell Local Plan Review 2040** – No response submitted.
- 87. **D-Day Beacon Lighting – 6<sup>th</sup> June 2024** – It was agreed that a beacon lighting event should be organised. This should be discussed again at the March meeting. **Clerk should contact relevant people and possibly put a note out in February asking for volunteers to organise the event.**
- 88. **To agree meeting dates for 2024 – Proposed dates are 19<sup>th</sup> March, 22<sup>nd</sup> May, 11<sup>th</sup> September, 18<sup>th</sup> December** – Proposed and agreed. **Clerk to book village hall and arrange for the dates to be published on the noticeboard and website.**

Meeting closed @ 9:21pm

**Date of next meeting – 19<sup>th</sup> March 2024**

Signed..... Date.....