

Sibford Gower Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on **Tuesday 19th March 2024** at **7pm** in Sibford Village Hall, Sibford Gower

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

In attendance: 5 members of the public, County Cllr Reynolds, Clerk.

89. Public participation session – A member of the public wanted to ensure their concerns re the road up to the Dr's Surgery are noted in the minutes. This is covered under item 109.

1 member of the public left the meeting at 7:08pm.

Business

90. Apologies for absence – Apologies received - Cllr Geoff Noquet. Apologies accepted – None.

91. To note the resignation of Cllr James Garstin – Noted with regret.

92. Co-option of new councillor – An advert for a new councillor has gone out but there have been no applicants. **Clerk to put a new advert out and to contact the other person who applied when Cllr Downes and Garstin were co-opted to see if they are still interested.**

93. To elect a Vice-Chairman – It was agreed not to elect anyone at this meeting and wait until the Annual Meeting in May when there may be an additional councillor.

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

95. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council (PC) meeting held on 15th November 2023 – The minutes were proposed, agreed, and duly signed.

96. 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 – Cllr J Noquet has contacted Highways but has not had any response. **Cllr J Noquet will chase this up.**
- ii. Update re request to Highways for their plans regarding the metal railings at the school – The main contact at Highways has left and it is now proving much more challenging to get any responses from them. County Cllr Reynolds advised that at the moment the roles within the Highways team are very unclear and he is also struggling to get any responses. **Cllr J Noquet will chase this up.**
- iii. Update re possible solutions re parking problems in the Bonds End Lane and Main Street area of the village – Defer to next meeting.
- iv. Response from Cllr Geoff Noquet re Standards Monitoring Complaints made against him to the Monitoring Officer of Cherwell District Council – Defer to next meeting.

Assets and services

97. Burial Ground

- a) Update re enforcement of Burial Ground Regulations – Cllr Noquet has not had any response from the person responsible for the grave that is not complying with the Regulations. **Clerk to send copy of the Regulations to the person responsible.**
- b) To approve the updates made to the Burial Ground Regulations as agreed at the last meeting – Proposed and agreed.
- c) To approve the new fees for use of the burial ground in line with the Church of England fees for 2024 – Proposed and agreed.

- d) Discussion re responsibility for maintenance of the Churchyard including tree management, memorial stones, and repair of the damaged walls – The Clerk has reviewed the minutes of both Sibford PC's over the last 10 years or so and has found limited information about who is responsible for various aspects of the Churchyard. Cllr Berks has discussed this with some people who were involved in the transfer of responsibility for the Churchyard to the Parish Council but has not managed to get any clear information. **Cllr Berks would like time to speak to one other person to see what he can find out and then will bring the info back to the Parish Council (PC) to agree next steps.**
- e) Subject to it being agreed that the tree maintenance is the responsibility of the Parish Council, proposal to instruct a full survey and mapping of the trees in the Churchyard and Burial Ground at a cost of £350 – It was agreed that despite it still not being clear who is responsible for the trees a report regarding the condition of the trees will be beneficial to whoever is responsible for them and is important for the safety of parishioners. It was proposed and agreed to go ahead with the survey. **Clerk to instruct the contractor to complete the survey. Clerk to ask Sibford Ferris Parish Council if they would be willing to pay half of the cost of the survey.**

98. To confirm completion of a quarterly asset inspection and agree any actions required – Cllr Downes confirmed that he has completed the inspection and the only issue noted was the wall that has fallen down in the Churchyard/Burial Ground which the PC are already aware of.

99. Proposal to purchase a replacement battery for the defibrillator on the Village Hall at a cost of up to £350 and pads (if required) up to £75 – Proposed and agreed.

100. To confirm management of the Millennium Field has been passed back to the Town Estate Charity (TEC) – Proposed and agreed.

Finance

101. Bank balances as at 13.03.24 - £67.67 and £14,840.23 – Cllr J Noquet confirmed the balances stated are correct.

102. Proposal to remove James Garstin as a signatory from the bank mandate - Proposed and agreed. **Clerk to arrange mandate update.** Cllr J Noquet has been approved previously to have access to online banking but did not complete the process. As the PC now only has 2 people who have access to online banking **Cllr J Noquet will try to get her access arranged. Clerk to send Cllr J Noquet relevant forms.**

103. To note and approve the following payments and receipts since the last meeting:

Payments: Proposed and agreed.

27.11.23	Sibford Village Hall	Donation	£400.00
27.11.23	Sibford Scene	Donation	£200.00
27.11.23	Kirsty Buttle	Expenses - SIM and One Drive share	£14.99
27.12.23	Thomas Fox Landscaping	Mowing of churchyard and strimming of wildflower area	£922.87
27.12.23	Lovesey Rural Services	Millennium Field Hedge trimming	£960.00
27.12.23	Chacombe Parish Council	Share of clerks laptop	£112.22
27.12.23	Kirsty Buttle	Salary and office Dec	£328.90
27.12.23	HMRC	Tax Dec	£42.20
29.12.23	NEST	Pension Dec	£21.00
29.01.24	Kirsty Buttle	Salary and office Jan	£328.90
29.01.24	HMRC	Tax Jan	£42.20
31.01.24	NEST	Pension Jan	£21.00
04.03.24	Kirsty Buttle	Salary and office Feb	£328.90
04.03.24	HMRC	Tax Feb	£42.20
29.02.24	NEST	Pension Feb	£21.00

Receipts: Noted.

15.11.23	Banbury Memorials	Memorial Fee - Gardiner	£31.00
11.12.23	Lloyds	Interest	£18.67
09.01.24	Lloyds	Interest	£15.10
29.01.24	Sibford Ferris Parish Council	Churchyard & Burial Ground cost share	£1,736.27
09.02.24	Lloyds	Interest	£15.80
11.03.24	Lloyds	Interest	£16.60
03.11.23	Turner	Burial fee	£360.00
14.11.23	CDC	Refund re dog bins	£300.30

Invoices to be paid: Proposed and agreed.

OALC	Annual membership	£168.00
Sibford Ferris Parish Council	Website share and burial fee share	£254.93
Kirsty Buttle	Salary and office Mar	£328.70
HMRC	Tax Mar	£42.40
NEST	Pension Mar	£21.00

104. To agree the following regular payments list from the 2024/25 agreed budget delegating authority to the clerk to make payments to relevant suppliers up to the budget total. All payments will need to be authorised online by 1 councillor in order for the payment to be made: It was Proposed and agreed to give the Clerk delegated powers to pay against all of the list except for the Millennium Field (£2,150) line as this is no longer required for the Millennium Field due to the TEC taking back responsibility. **Clerk to put the virement of that budget line on the next agenda.**

Clerks salary (inc tax)	£4,764.00
Clerks expenses/office allowance	£250.00
Venue hire	£270.00
Insurance	£365.00
IT and Website	£100.00
Training	£300.00
Subscriptions (ICO, OALC, CFO)	£230.00
Church Yard & Burial Ground	£2,185.00
Millennium Field	£2,150.00
Millennium Field (Dog bin emptying)	£120.00
Other dog bin emptying (x4)	£450.00
Highway verges	£883.50
Defib	£100.00
Annual Parish Meeting	£100.00
Miriam Tebbs Land	£150.00
General Contingency	£200.00
Other (D-Day 80, Parking scheme Bonds End Lane)	£480.00

105. To consider increasing the Clerk's payscale by 1 SCP to SCP 27 from 1st April 2024 – Proposed and agreed.

Planning

106. Planning applications received

23/03176/TCA - West Farm Cottage, Main Street, Sibford Gower. T1 x Ash- Fell to ground level. early signs of Ash Dieback, in close proximity to the property. T2 x Beech- 15% thin of whole canopy to let more light into the garden whilst retaining a natural shape. T3 x No 5 Apples- Reduce to 3 metres from ground level to make further works manageable. T4 x Cononeaster- reduce height by 4 metres and shape. T5 x Apple- reduce by 1 metre. **No representation made. APPROVED.**

23/03312/F - Elmridge Farm House, Main Street, Sibford Gower. Conversion of existing outbuilding to form ancillary residential annexe. **No comment. (Response made using delegated powers). APPROVED.**

23/03596/F - Top Barn Farm, Sibford Gower. Change of Use of agricultural land to residential associated with existing consent 23/00542/F. **No representation made. APPROVED.**

107. Planning decisions received

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

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. **Refused.**

108. Appeal decisions 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). **Appeal dismissed.**

Community

109. Concerns raised by a member of the public regarding the dangerous state of the road up to the Dr's Surgery in Burdrop – Cllr George Reynolds has advised – ‘I have been in email contact with OCC. Although no promises have been made other than it is in the program I did receive a notice of intended closure of the road, outside the surgery, for "full width inlay resurfacing " for the 19th and 20th of August. In my view it needs to be done earlier and I will press for that but at least it is a sort of promise of action.’

110. Concerns raised regarding the damaged wall obstructing the footpath below the Blaze Inn Saddles Pub – After some discussion it was agreed that **Cllr J Noquet should put another report on Fixmystreet** about this and if a positive response is not received then the **Clerk should write to the owner of the wall** asking if they could repair it or at least move the obstruction from the pavement.

111. D-Day Beacon Lighting – 6th June 2024 – Keith Hicks has agreed to organise an event.

112. Plans for the Annual Parish Meeting 2024 – The meeting will take place from 6:30pm to 7pm and will include the usual agenda items of report from the Chairman and any questions or comments from the public.

113. Information exchange – Cllr Berks asked that all councillors ensure they are copying in all councillors to e-mail and ensure they are replying on the correct e-mail chain to make it easier to follow the full discussion.

It was noted that one of the PC TEC nominees’ term will be ending in October. It was agreed that Cllrs Downes and Berks should find out if the nominee wishes to restand and bring back the info to the next PC meeting where an advert can be agreed if required. **Clerk to put on next agenda.**

A parishioner stated that it is very sad that James Garstin felt that he could no longer continue as a parish councillor as he was a great asset to the PC.

Cllr Berks has been asked by a parishioner if the PC can organise some litter picking. **Clerk to ask Cherwell District Council if they have any litter picking kits left.**

Meeting closed @ 8:12pm.

Date of next meeting – 22nd May 2024

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