

Sibford Gower Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of the Parish Council held on **Wednesday 22nd May 2024** at **7pm** in Sibford Village Hall, Sibford Gower

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

In attendance: 6 members of the public, Clerk.

- 1. Election of Chairman** – It was proposed and agreed to elect Cllr J Noquet as the Chairman. Cllr Noquet completed her Declaration of Acceptance of Office which was countersigned by the Clerk.
- 2. Public participation session** – Concerns were raised by a parishioner about the number of potholes in the village. **Cllr J Noquet agreed to try to arrange a meeting with the new Highways Parish Council (PC) Liaison representative** to show them all of the areas of concern. **Clerk to put notice on website asking parishioners to e-mail any specific concerns relating to Highways matters (roads and verges) to the Clerk before 7th June to allow Cllr Noquet to compile a list issues to discuss with Highways.**

Business

- 3. Apologies for absence** – Apologies received - Cllr Alan Berks. Apologies accepted – None. Apologies were also received from County Cllr Reynolds.
- 4. Co-option of new councillor** – It was proposed and agreed to co-opt Alistair Paul onto the PC. It was agreed that Alistair must complete his Declaration of Acceptance of Office by 7th June 2024.
- 5. To elect a Vice-Chairman** – It was agreed to defer this item to the September meeting,
- 6. Members' declarations of interest for items on the agenda** – None.
- 7. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council (PC) meeting held on 19th March 2024** – The minutes were proposed, agreed, and duly signed.
- 8. Outstanding matters/actions from previous meetings**
 - a) 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 – Despite Cllr J Noquet advising Highways of the Health & Safety concerns Highways are not willing to replace the bollards however they have agreed to arrange for vegetation clearance in order to reinstate the footpath. This item can now be taken off future agendas.
 - b) Update re request to Highways for their plans regarding the metal railings at the school (Cllr J Noquet) – The new railings have now been installed.
 - c) Update re possible solutions re parking problems in the Bonds End Lane and Main Street area of the village (Cllr Berks) - No further progress has been made on this. Cllr Berks would like to review the situation again as various key factors have changed which may have reduced the problem at least for the near future. The councillors present are not aware what the key factors are so hope to find out more from Cllr Berks at the next meeting.
 - d) Response from Cllr Geoff Noquet re Standards Monitoring Complaints made against him to the Monitoring Officer of Cherwell District Council – Cllr G Noquet apologised for using bad language at the last meeting but stated that he is not going to apologise for being angry with certain people and that is all he will say on the matter. It was agreed that in future when items come up on agendas which are just to confirm what action has been taken on an item using delegated powers no discussion should take place at the meeting, and if a discussion is required to a decision being needed then any councillors who have any conflict of interest about the item should leave the room.

- e) Update re Cllr J Noquet getting access to online banking – Cllr J Noquet confirmed that she now has access to the online banking.

9. Proposal to adopt a Biodiversity Policy – Proposed and agreed.

10. Proposal to re-adopt the following policies with no changes made – Proposed and agreed.

- a) Code of Conduct
- b) Complaints Procedure
- c) Grievance Policy
- d) Disciplinary Policy
- e) Standing Orders
- f) Publication Scheme
- g) Financial Regulations
- h) Internal Financial Controls
- i) Risk Assessment
- j) Records Retention Policy
- k) Privacy Notice
- l) Data Protection Policy
- m) Freedom of Information Policy
- n) Subject Access Request Procedure
- o) Role Holder Privacy Notice
- p) Data Breach Policy
- q) Scheme of Delegation

Assets and services

11. Burial Ground

- a) Update re enforcement of Burial Ground Regulations – The grave is now compliant with the requirements so this item can be removed from the agenda.
- b) Discussion re responsibility for maintenance of the Churchyard including tree management, memorial stones, and repair of the damaged walls - Cllr Berks has made some progress on gathering more information about the responsibility for the Churchyard but has advised that the information relates to proposals at the time and not an agreement so he believes more research is required. It was agreed that this does need to make some progress over the coming months due to the need to set next year's budget in December. As the maintenance of the Churchyard could result in considerable costs for the PC should it be found that all responsibility lies with the PC this will have a significant impact on the budget and quotes will be required in advance of the budget setting. It was agreed that if firm information isn't found in the next 6 weeks the PC need to start arranging discussions with the Parochial Church Council in order to put together firm proposals about the ongoing maintenance at the September meeting which then allows time for quotes to be sought before the December meeting.
- c) To receive the tree inspection report if available – The tree inspection should take place before the end of May. The outcome of the inspection may require an extraordinary meeting of the PC if any urgent safety issues come up.

12. To discuss management of the defib and updates of its status to The Circuit – Currently Cllr Berks and Cllr Downes are completing the regular checks of the defib but only Cllr Berks is registered on 'The Circuit' (the website linked to South Central Ambulance Service (SCAS) where the up to date status of the defib should be reported so SCAS know when it is inactive and therefore they should not send anyone experiencing a medical emergency to that defib). It was agreed that the Clerk should be added onto 'The Circuit' account as a secondary Guardian so the Clerk will receive any reminders if the regular defib checks have not been registered on 'The Circuit'. **Cllr Berks to add the clerk as a guardian on 'The Circuit' account.** Sibford Ferris Parish Council (SFPC) have asked if SGPC feel that SFPC should be sharing the responsibility of maintenance of the defib and the costs relating to

maintaining the defib. It was agreed that it does not take much time or funds to maintain the defib therefore it seems unnecessary to overcomplicate the setup by adding in users from another organisation, so whilst the PC is grateful for SFPC's offer of help, it does not think it is required. It was also noted that there is a separate defib in Sibford Ferris which would probably be the more appropriate defib for SFPC to get involved in the management of should they wish to. It was agreed that the **Clerk should advise SFPC that SGPC do not need any help in relation to the defib. Clerk to advise the SCAS that the Clerk is being added onto the account as a new secondary guardian and that in future any communication about the SGPC defib should only be sent to the registered account holders.**

13. To agree which insurance provider to use for the next year. Quotes received are:

- Clear Councils (current insurer) £388.92
- Clear Councils 3 year agreement £376.92
- Zurich Insurance £264
- Zurich insurance including War Memorial cover £327

It was proposed and agreed to accept the quote from Zurich of £264. **Clerk to contact Zurich to arrange the new policy.**

Finance

14. Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2024

- a) To receive the internal auditor's report for 23/24 and agree any actions required – The report was received with no issues raised.
- b) To appoint an internal auditor for the 2024-25 financial year – It was proposed and agreed to appoint Sue Rowley as the Internal Auditor for 24-25.
- c) To complete and approve the annual governance statement - It was proposed and agreed to tick 'yes' to all statements except statement 9 which is Not applicable'.
- d) To approve the accounting statements – The Accounting Statements were approved and duly signed.
- e) To approve completion of the Certificate of Exemption for 23/24 – Proposed and agreed.
- f) To agree dates for the notice of public rights 23/24 – proposed dates are 3rd June to 12th July 2024 – Proposed and agreed.

15. Bank balances as at 16.05.24 - £254.16 and £20,259.00 - Cllr J Noquet confirmed the balances stated are correct.

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

Payments: Proposed and agreed.

15.04.24	Defibstore	Adult defib pads	£138.00
01.05.24	CDC	Half yearly charge for emptying 5 dog bins	£334.62
01.05.24	N R Prickett	Miriam Tebbs hedge cutting	£120.00
01.05.24	Kirsty Buttle	Salary and office Apr 24	£318.23
01.05.24	HMRC	Tax Apr 24	£62.40
30.04.24	NEST	Pension Apr 24	£21.55
01.05.24	Kirsty Buttle	Mileage and parking	£7.50
01.05.24	Thomas Fox Landscaping	Mowing churchyard 11.04.24	£150.30

Receipts: Noted.

03.04.24	Town Estate Charity	Share of grass cutting costs for 2023-24	£1,032.91
10.04.24	CDC	Precept	£4,675.00
17.04.24	HMRC	VAT refund	£1,831.21
09.04.24	Lloyds	Interest	£14.72

09.05.24	Lloyds	Interest	£19.05
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Invoices to be paid: Proposed and agreed.

N R Prickett	Grass cutting 7th May	£368.40
Sue Rowley	Internal audit 23-24	£60.00

Planning

17. Planning applications received

24/00613/F - The Pheasant Pluckers Inn, Burdrop. Amended design to 16/01525/F - Erection of a single storey building providing 3 no en-suite letting rooms amended to three bedroom cottage for holiday let. **Sibford Gower Parish Council currently has 4 councillors, 2 of which are the owners of the property that this application relates to, therefore we do not have a quorum of councillors able to vote on a response to this application.**

24/00661/F - New Rectory, Acre Ditch, Sibford Gower. Variation of Condition 2 (plans) of 21/03450/F - The drawings will indicate the dwelling as built. **No representation made.**

24/00783/TCA - Holy Trinity Church, Acre Ditch, Sibford Gower. T1 x Cherry - Crown raise by 2.5 metres all round. Crown clean removing all dead wood and poor pruning cuts. **No representation made.**
APPROVED.

24/01298/TCA – Sibford Gower Endowed Primary School, Main Street, Sibford Gower. Please refer to Tree Survey supplied as an attachment (see Cherwell District Council planning web pages). **No objections.**

18. Planning decisions received – see 24/00783/TCA

Community

19. Parish Council nomination to the Town Estate Charity (TEC) – Brian Heather’s term of office will end in October 2024. It was agreed that **Cllrs Berks and Downes should speak to Brian to find out if he would like to continue for another 4 years.** If Brian wishes to restand the PC agreed that they are happy to renominate him. If Brian does not wish to restand it was agreed that Cllrs Downes and Berks should find out from the TEC what they feel they need from any new nominees and put out an advert with a deadline for response of the end of August to allow time for applications to be considered and a nomination to be made at the September meeting.

20. To consider the pre consultation information provided by Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) re implementing a 20mph speed limit throughout Sibford Gower – The PC agreed that they fully support the pre consultation information provided by OCC. **Clerk to inform OCC.**

21. D-Day Beacon Lighting – 6th June 2024 - Keith Hicks has kindly arranged some activities on behalf of both of the Sibfords PC’s to commemorate D-Day 80 on 6th June. A BBC documentary “D-Day 06-06-44” will be shown in the village hall at 7pm with light refreshment beforehand. This will be followed by the lighting of the Sibford Beacon at 9:15pm in line with the National Beacon lighting programme. The Primary school have agreed to read the specially written “Poem for D-Day Heros” at 11am along with other schools throughout the country.

22. Information exchange – None.

Meeting closed @ 8:08pm

Date of next meeting – 11th September 2024

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