

Sibford Gower Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on **Wednesday 11th September 2024 at 7pm** in Sibford Village Hall, Sibford Gower

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

In attendance: 4 members of the public, Clerk.

- 32. Public participation session** – A parishioner advised that Dave Catling at Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) had been looking into ways to prevent vehicles crashing into his wall. Dave Catling has since left OCC and it appears the new staff don't seem to be clear what their objective is and they have now installed a sign in a location where it is likely to get hit. The parishioner asked if the Parish Council (PC) can contact Highways to make them aware of the issue and explain the purpose of the changes. **Cllr J Noquet advised that there is a new Highways contact so she will get in touch with them to make them aware of the history of the issue and ask that they make suitable improvements.**

A parishioner stated that they have concerns about decisions being made by the Town Estate Charity (TEC) and as it is a charity that is meant to work for the benefit of residents of Sibford Gower and Burdrop and as the Parish Councillors are the representatives of Sibford Gower and Burdrop the parishioner hoped that the PC could help try to ensure the TEC are being open and transparent about their activities. One of the parishioner's concerns is that they believe the TEC turned down a grant request from a village group that would have been of great benefit to some of the residents but they approved a grant to an organisation where the majority of recipients were not residents of Sibford Gower and Burdrop. It was noted that the PC have asked the TEC for a representative to attend a PC meeting twice per year to report back to the PC as stated in their governing document but this has still not happened. The parishioner advised that their request is more about details of the amounts of grants made and who they are made to. It was noted that this information can be found on the Charity Commission website although at the moment the most recent report is dated to the end of December 2022. It was agreed that the PC will write to the TEC to ask them to send a representative to the December meeting to provide some feedback to the council about their activities. **Clerk to write to the TEC.**

Business

- 33. Apologies for absence** – None.
- 34. Members' declarations of interest for items on the agenda** – None.
- 35. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council (PC) meeting held on 25th July 2024** – The minutes were proposed, agreed, and duly signed.
- 36. Outstanding matters/actions from previous meetings**
- a) Update re possible solutions re parking problems in the Bonds End Lane and Main Street area of the village – Cllr Berks advised that this no longer appears to be such a big issue so some of the solutions previously suggested may no longer be necessary. As the biggest issues occur when the farm is having deliveries on large vehicles it was suggested that a sign could be purchased for the farmer to place in the area the day before deliveries to inform parishioners to keep the area clear to allow the deliveries to take place and then remove the sign when the deliveries are complete. **Cllr Berks to get quotes for a sign to bring to the next meeting.** Another idea was to put a note on the Sibfords website a couple of days before deliveries so those who are subscribed to the website updates will receive the notice. It was

also suggested that the farmer and those who live in the area affected by the deliveries could set up a WhatsApp group so the farmer can notify them directly when deliveries are going to take place so they can keep the area clear.

b) Addition of the Clerk as a Guardian for the defibrillator – This has now been completed.

37. To discuss Declarations of Interests – Due to recent concerns raised with the Monitoring Officer and the response from the Monitoring Officer being different from the advice provided to the Clerk by the organisation the PC pays to provide legal advice, councillors’ raised concerns about the lack of clarity on what they should and shouldn’t declare any interests on and what exactly constitutes an interest. **Clerk to seek further advice on declarations of interests.**

38. Proposal to adopt the following policies: Proposed and agreed.

- a) Financial Regulations
- b) Scheme of Delegation
- c) Internal Financial Controls

39. To appoint an Internal Controls Councillor – It was proposed and agreed to appoint Cllr Downes as the Internal Controls Councillor.

Assets and services

40. Burial Ground

- a) To receive the tree inspection report and quotes for required tree work – The PC have received 3 quotes for all of the items raised in the report. This should now be discussed with the Parochial Church Council. This will be taken forward when it is clear who is responsible for the maintenance of the trees and when funding can be obtained.
- b) Discussion re responsibility for maintenance of the Churchyard including tree management, memorial stones, and repair of the damaged walls – It was agreed that a meeting should be held with representative(s) of the PCC, and Sibford Ferris Parish Council in order to gain clarity on who is responsible for which areas of maintenance of the Churchyard and to discuss the options for tree work. Cllrs J Noquet, and Berks agreed to be the representatives from Sibford Gower PC. **Clerk to arrange a meeting.**

41. To agree which grass cutting contracts to put out to tender, the length of the contract being offered, and deadline for response – It was agreed that a tender should go out for the grass cutting contract of the Churchyard and Burial Ground. The contract should be for 3 years and have a deadline for response of 30th November. **Clerk and Cllr Berks to put together the tender document and send to councillors for approval before sending to contractors.**

Finance

42. Bank balances as at 05.09.24 - £193.21 and £16,816.02 – Cllr J Noquet confirmed the balances stated are correct.

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

Payments: Proposed and agreed.

05.08.24	Thomas Fox Landscaping	Mowing churchyard 4, and 25 July	£300.60
03.09.24	Kirsty Buttle	Salary and office Aug	£318.23
03.09.24	HMRC	Tax Aug	£62.40
30.08.24	NEST	Pension Aug	£21.55

Receipts: Noted.

31.07.24	Sole & Son	Dyer fee	£566.00
09.08.24	Lloyds	Interest	£17.26

Planning

44. Planning applications received

24/01699/TCA – Mawles Farmhouse, Main Street, Sibford Gower. T1 x Douglas Fir - Fell to ground level. T2 x Cherry - Fell to ground level. T3 x Hazel - Fell to ground level. **No representation made. APPROVED.**

24/01929/TCA – Glebe Farm, Main Street, Sibford Gower. T1 x 1 - Mature healthy 80 foot populus balsamifera marked by cross on plan in boundary hedgerow, previously pollarded requires repollarding to 15 foot at request of neighbour at Rose Cottage, whose garden is overshadowed from midday onwards. Access through our orchard means there will be some disturbance to mature apple trees; felling by professional arborist using zipwire to lower branches. **No objection. (Response made using delegated powers). APPROVED.**

24/02065/F - Serenity Of Sibford, At Gautherns Barn, Colony Road, Sibford Gower. Retrospective - Change of Use from a beauty salon at level 1 of the building into a single dwelling. **No comment. (Response made using delegated powers).**

24/02359/TCA – Hadlands, Bonds End Lane, Sibford Gower. 1 x Apple Tree - Crown reduction by 2M by removal of heavier water shoots back to framework and a general crown thin and dead wood. **No objection.**

24/02364/TCA – West Farm Cottage, Main Street, Sibford Gower. T1- Cut Leaf Beech - Reduce crown by 2-3m. **No objection.**

45. Planning decisions received

24/01766/PIP - Former Paddocks, Backside Lane, Sibford Gower. Permission in Principle - construction of up to 5 no. dwellings. **Refused.**

1 member of the public left the meeting at 8:16pm.

Community

46. Parish Council nomination to the Town Estate Charity (TEC) – Cllrs Berks and Downes confirmed that the current nominee, Brian Heather, would like to remain in post so it was agreed to renominate Brian. **Cllrs Berks and Downes to inform the TEC.**

47. Information exchange – It was noted that the Clerk has submitted her resignation. Some councillors asked for their thanks to the Clerk for her hard work during her 4 ½ years working with the PC be minuted.

Meeting closed @ 8:21pm.

Date of next meeting – 18th December 2024

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