

Sibford Ferris Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of the Parish Council held on **Tuesday 22nd July 2025** at **7pm** at Sibford School

Present: Cllrs Ginny Bennett, Edward Rossiter, Andrew Meyler, Clerk.

In attendance: 4 members of the public, District Cllr Brant.

- 20. Apologies for absence** – Apologies received – Cllr Gordon. Apologies accepted – None.
- 21. Members’ declarations of interest for items on the agenda** – None.
- 22. To co-opt a new councillor** – No applications have been received. **Clerk to continue to advertise vacancy.**
- 23. Public participation session** – Two members of the public advised that they believe there has been some misinformation about the new development going around in the parish recently by various means and they have spoken to Deanfield Homes about this and Deanfield have produced a newsletter to try to provide clear information to parishioners. A copy of the newsletter has been submitted to the Sibford Scene editor so they hope some of the information will be published via the Sibford Scene and a copy has been provided to the Parish Council (PC). A discussion was held about the S106 agreement and how some of the allocations, such as those for bus shelters, are too high for that type of spend and could be better used elsewhere in the village but due to the way the S106 agreement has been written the funds cannot currently be used for any other purpose. It was agreed that the **Clerk should write to District Cllr Brant to see if he can help try to get the S106 funds reallocated (if legally possible) to other purposes that would be of benefit to Sibford Ferris and Sibford Gower.** It was also noted that there are some differences in understanding about who will be managing the various areas of the new development once it has been completed. **Clerk to try to arrange a meeting with Deanfield Homes, the appointed Management Company, and Cllr Brant to try to get clarity on which organisations will be responsible for which areas of the development.**
- 24. To approve the minutes of the Parish Council (PC) meeting held on 20th May 2025** – The minutes were proposed, agreed, and duly signed.
- 25. Outstanding matters/actions from previous meetings**
- i) Update re repair of bus shelter opposite the junction to Hawk’s Lane – Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) have received a report from the bus shelter manufacturer advising that the damaged bus shelter cannot be repaired and a full replacement will be required. This has been ordered but is on an 11 week lead time. Whilst this is in progress OCC will be making enquiries regarding an insurance claim through the company whose vehicle damaged the bus shelter.
 - ii) Consultation re Sibford School footpath diversions – It is understood that some of the new paths will initially be fenced off until hedges have grown to create a more natural division between the footpath and school site. It was agreed that this seems like a sensible safety measure and the PC support these changes. **Clerk to submit a support response.**
- 26. Concerns raised by parishioners:**
- i) Light pollution from the Deanfield Homes site – It was noted that there are minimal streetlights in the new development and it wasn’t thought that those lights could be bright enough to affect other residents in the parish however a **member of the public agreed to speak to Deanfield Homes to ask if they would consider installing shades on the lights** which would direct the light downward reducing light pollution and glare. It was also noted that the show home had been left with all lights on but the sales office staff have been spoken to about this and should now be turning the lights off at night.
 - ii) State of the grass around the play area on Cotswold Close which does not appear to get cut (owned by Cherwell District Council (CDC)) – This area has been an issue for a number of years and despite numerous e-mails between the Clerk and Cherwell District Council (CDC) who own the land immediately around the play area, CDC do not appear to have been maintaining the area. It is not clear if CDC also own the garages or if they are owned by another organisation such as Sanctuary Housing. It was agreed that the **Clerk should try to get clarity on ownership** and then discuss

possible options to help those organisations find a cost effective way to maintain the area, such as the PC arranging for their contractor to maintain the areas at the same time as the play area and then recharging the costs to the relevant organisations.

27. To consider whether Sibford Ferris may want the streetlights to be part of the Oxfordshire County Council (OCC) Part Night Lighting Scheme – It was agreed that the PC would consider taking part in the scheme when the details have been confirmed. **Clerk to inform OCC.**

28. Concerns raised about the safety of the gap in the hedge on Hook Norton Road – A parishioner from the new development is concerned that the gap that has been made in the hedge on the site is a safety risk and could result in someone running out onto the road due to limited visibility. The PC have no power over this so advised the parishioner to contact Deanfield Homes and/or CDC Planning Team. The Clerk has been copied in to their contact with Deanfield Homes and the CDC Planning Team but is not aware if there has been any response. **A member of the public present who lives on the new development agreed to speak to their contact at Deanfield Homes** to find out if the gap in the hedge could be filled and if this is not allowed due to planning requirements ask if a gate could be installed to try to reduce the risk of anyone running into the road.

29. Request for a dog waste bin on Stour View – It was noted that as it is not yet clear who will be managing the various areas of the new development it is not known if the Management Company will be responsible for the provision of dog waste bins so it was agreed that this should not be considered further until it is clear what provision has already been made.

30. Planning applications received – None

31. Play area

- i) To receive the annual Playsafety Inspection Report (if available) – Not yet received.
- ii) Any other issues – There is a problem with the soft closure hinges on the gates. The professional inspection report is due to be received in the next couple of weeks so it was proposed and agreed to instruct the play area contractor, Chris Jarvis, to complete all repair works raised by the Report when it is received. The surface still doesn't seem to be levelling so Chris' advice should be sought on this. **Clerk to instruct Chris Jarvis when the report has been received.**

32. Finance

- i) Confirmation of the bank balances as at 14.07.25 of £182.59 and £11,422.01 – Cllr Meyler confirmed the balances stated are correct.
- ii) To confirm completion of an asset condition check and agree any actions required – Cllr Meyler confirmed that he has completed a check and no issues were raised. Pitch Hill field is very overgrown. It was proposed and agreed to obtain a quote to get the area cleared enough to give the trees the best chance of survival. **Clerk to obtain quotes for clearance.** At the moment the land is not used by parishioners therefore it may not be seen as a cost effective benefit to the parish. It was agreed that the PC should consider at the next meeting if there are other uses for the field that could be of more benefit to the parish than its current use. **Clerk to put item on next agenda.**
- iii) To confirm upgrade of the website package to 'Gold' at an additional cost of £36 per year due to performance issues – Proposed and agreed.
- iv) To confirm completion of the first (Apr to Jun) quarterly finance check for 2025-26 – Cllr Meyler confirmed the check has taken place and all was found to be in order.
- v) Confirmation of payments made since the last meeting using delegated powers: Proposed and agreed.

19.05.25	Lloyds	Account fee	£4.25
30.05.25	Sue Rowley	Internal Audit 24-25	£60.00
17.06.25	Lloyds	Account fee	£4.25
26.06.25	Citizens Advice	Donation	£25.00
26.06.25	Sibford Village Hall	Donation	£400.00
26.06.25	Sibford Scene	Donation	£50.00
26.06.25	Thomas Fox Landscaping	Play area mowing 6 and 19.05.25	£57.02
26.06.25	Zen	Upgrade to Gold account	£50.16
26.06.25	Kirsty Buttle	Salary and office June	£240.10

26.06.25	HMRC	Tax June	£57.60
30.06.25	NEST	Pension June	£16.70

vi) To note the following receipts: Noted.

09.06.25	Lloyds	Interest	£8.47
09.07.25	Lloyds	Interest	£6.70

vii) Proposal to pay the following invoices: Proposed and agreed.

Thomas Fox Landscaping	Play area mowing 2, 16, 30 June	£85.53
Kirsty Buttle	Salary and office July	£240.10
HMRC	Tax July	£57.60
NEST	Pension July	£16.70

33. Planning decisions received – None.

34. Information exchange – The External Auditor’s Report was received after publication of the agenda. No issues were raised and the report will be formally received at the next meeting. The report has been published on the PC pages of the village website.

District and County Cllr Brant provided the following information:

- The Local Plan has been approved and will now go to the Planning Inspectorate to decide whether it should be adopted.
- Local Government Reorganisation plans are being put together to form new Unitary Authorities. CDC and OCC are submitting different plans for consideration by the Government who will make the final decision on what areas will be included within each Authority. This will happen over the next 2-3 years.
- OCC has made a commitment to clean every drain and gully in the county before the end of September 2025.

Meeting closed @ 8:30pm

Date of next meeting – 17th September 2025

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