**Minutes of Somerford Keynes Parish Council Meeting**

**Village Hall, 11th September 2023**

**Present:** Cllr G. Valentine (GV), Cllr M. Keegan (MK), Cllr A.Clark (AC), Cllr H. Collins (HC)

**Also present:** Clerk K. Holdsworth, CDC Cllr M.McKeown (MM), Mike Wilding (MW, Village Lage Committee Chair) and five members of the public.

**1.Election of Officers**

Cllr A Clark (AC) agreed to Chair the meeting, no decision has been made on a permanent Chair.

Cllr Hilary Collins was welcomed as a new Parish Councillor.

Cllr R Roffe has tendered her resignation from the Parish Council.

**2.Apologies**

GCC Cllr L. Spivey (LS),Cllr M.H-Oldland (MH-O), Cllr N. Hunt (NH)

**3.Declaration of Interest**

GV and HC (LME)

**4.Public Session**

The following matters were raised;

4.1 The planning application for a bathroom/changing facility block at Lake 32 doesn’t mention a connection to mains sewerage so there was a question as to how waste water and toilet effluent would be handled.

4.2 A potential fire hazard was identified when cars were parked on long dry grass on a very hot day on Tim Holland-Martin’s land.

4.3 Cars being parked on both sides of the road near Neigh Bridge allowing only single file traffic on entering the village and whether yellow lines could be considered to prevent this happening.

**5.Approval of Minutes of the meeting held on 24th July 2023**

Proposed GV, Seconded MK.

**6.Report from County Cllr L. Spivey**

6.1 LS has informed the PC that the roll out of the speed camera scheme is delayed slightly due to changes in staff.

6.2 LS is aware of recent accidents at the crossroads between Spratsgate Lane and the Ewen to South Cerney Road and has asked for a safety inspection as well as accident reports, signage and road markings to be looked at to improve at safety of the junction.

**7.Report from District Cllr M. McKeown**

MM’s full report is in appendix one. Of likely most interest to parishioners is that there is a new planning officer, Martin Perks, for the proposed development on the land to the South East of Ashlands House.

This will go to the full planning committee at MM’s request due to its apparent conflict with the Neighbourhood Development Plan. It is currently unclear when this will occur as there has been a high staff turnover in CDC’s Planning Department. The applicants has recently added new documents to the submission.

**8. Village Lake**

Mike Wilding’s report can be found in appendix two.

MW highlighted that since the Village Lake Committee was formed in September 2017 there has been an annual budget from SKPC of around £1050. Given inflation since 2017 has been about 35%, an increase to around £1400 for 23/24 was requested.

The PC acknowledge the good work of the committee and the asset that the Village Lake is and agreed to consider this.

**Action** – GV to summarise PC annual income and committed spend to ascertain affordability.

**9. Clerks Report and Matters Arising**

9.1 AC reported that we are still awaiting news on the Speed Camera installation date which has been delayed due to ongoing staff changes.

**Action** MH-O to provide ongoing updates.

9.2 MK informed the PC that part of the Cullimore work has been completed.

 **Action** MK to update the PC at future meetings.

9.3 MK reported that there is still significant noise at the Cotswold Country Park & Beach from activities there.

**Action** MK has corresponded with the owners and will continue to chase for response.

9.4 AC reported that some feedback was received in relation to requests for data on historic accidents.

**Action** AC to write to Cllr L Spivey to reinforce the efforts she has already made.

9.5 KH reported that all the Village Surveys (53 in total) were now in and is in the process of analysing the feedback.

**Action** All PC members to review. Compile a list of priorities by time of October PC meeting and then start to formulate action plan

**10.Planning Items**

**Wiltshire/Border**

**23/01552/NEI** - Neighbouring Authority Consultation for Construction and operation of anaerobic digestion facility, ancillary infrastructure and construction of new access from Ashton Road at Land West of Ashton Road Ashton Keynes Wiltshire. The PC have submitted an objection to this to CDC. KH has informed other local Parish Councils we have done this an offered to potentially work together on this going forwards.

**New Planning Applications**

**23/02316/TCONR** Works to trees in conservation areas for T1 - Raywood Ash - Tip prune back by 4 meters on south west limb over the hedge and east limb over the seating area. Crown lift to 3.5meters.

T2 - Ash - crown lift to 4m

T3 - Crab Apple - 2m overall crown reduction.

T4 - Black Walnut - reduce crown back to previous pruning points. at West Manor Barn Somerford Keynes Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 6DL – **No Objection**

**23/02209/FUL** - Full Application for Erection of bathroom/changing facility block at Lake 32 Spratsgate Lane Somerford Keynes Gloucestershire –

**Action:** MK and HC to draft a letter to the Planning Department asking what are the visitor number/capacity reasons that that make this necessary and for clarification of the waste details.

**23/02339/CLEUD -** Cert of Lawful Existing Use or Devt for Certificate of Lawful Existing Use of Development under Section 191 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 - Extension to west of the property and double garage extension with ancillary guest accommodation above to south of the property at The Orchard Mill Lane Somerford Keynes Cirencester Gloucestershire - **No Objection**

**11.** **Correspondence**

Has been received on the following topics from parishioners;

11.1 A broken footbridge. This has now been repaired. Thanks to the prompt actions of Frank Dorrington-Ward and his team at GCC.

11.2 Noise at Poole Keynes on a number of occasions. Only one complaint was received.

11.3 Clearance of the Spillway from the Thames onto Lower Mill.

Rob Squizzoni, LME Estate Manager, has confirmed that this is in the process of being cleared as a priority along with other works. Rob is happy to come and talk through this and it was agreed the PC should take him up on his kind offer.

**Action:** GV to agree a date for a PC meeting convenient for Rob to attend.

Other Correspondence

11.4 A note has been sent to Tim Holland-Martin thanking him for his time at the previous PC meeting. We have received a reply back saying he was pleased to be involved and is happy to join us again if so wished.

**12. Financial Matters**

12.1 An Invoice of £1575 has been sent to Lake 32 for the rent on the Village Field.

12.2 Managing the PC account necessitates attending physical branches and using cheques. With the closure of bank branches this may cause logistical challenges going forwards.

**Action**: KH to look into the feasibility of the PC moving to online banking.

**13. Any Other Business**

13.1 There is a vacant position on the Parish Council, if anyone would like to join us please get in touch via skpcclerk@gmail.com

13.2 The matter of flooding was raised and the PC agreed that this needed to be looked at and better understood. It is recognised that this is a complex topic but that there is much knowledge amongst a number of parishioners who can be engaged to assist.

**Action:** HC to produce some initial terms of reference to define the scope of activity.

The meeting closed at 9.15 pm

**Date of next meeting: Monday 9th October 2023 at 7.30 pm Appendix One – Report from Mike McKeown**

**1. Planning Updates**

**Turnover in Planning Officers**

CDC has recently experienced a significant turnover in planning officers, with several leaving for roles in the private sector.

**Planning Application 20/04079/FUL**

• **Location**: Land to The South East Of Ashland House, Somerford Keynes

• **New Officer**: Martin Perks

• **Status**: The application will go to the full planning committee due to my request and its apparent conflict with the Neighbourhood Development Plan (NDP).

• **Timeline**: It is currently unclear when this will occur, I will update when known.

**2. Cotswold Solar Initiative**

• **Partnership**: Launched in collaboration with Make My Home Green. Cotswold Home Solar launches to boost green energy uptake.

• **Objective**: To increase the uptake of solar panels, home storage batteries, and EV chargers in Cotswold homes.

• **Additional Option**: This initiative is an additional option for local homeowners, alongside Cotswold Energy, which was selected by Thames Head Energy for its first 12 installations starting this month. Ordering with the Thames Head Energy Community Purchase Scheme - Thames Head Energy

**3. Climathon Event**

• **Focus**: Food, Farming, and Land use contribution to Net Zero.

• **Leadership**: Led by the University of Gloucestershire and the Royal Agricultural University (RAU), supported by CDC.

• **Participants**: Farmers, landowners, and interested individuals.

* 1. • **Dates and Venues**:

• Online: Wednesday, 27th, 9:30 to 11 am

• In-person: Growth Hub, Thursday, 28th, 9 am to 5 pm

• More Information and Registration: The Cotswold Climathon Tickets, Wed 27 Sep 2023 at 09:30 | Eventbrite

**4. EV Partner Program (In Development)**

 **Goals:**

• Make Cotswolds a great place to own an EV.

• Make Cotswolds a great place to visit with an EV.

• By having EVs chargers available in every town and village in the Cotswolds

**Funding Sources**:

 • Rural Prosperity Fund

 • Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL)

 • Crowdfund Cotswold

 **Implementation:**

 • Parish Council would fund the installation, similar to CDC in our car parks, using the funding options above

• Charger partner collects payment via App and provides support and operation.

• Working out profit share and future residents' preferential pricing options.

• Designed to work for village halls with charitable status.

**Appendix Two – Village Lake Report from Mike Wilding**

**REPORT TO SKPC for 11th Sept 2023 MEETING**

**1 COMMITTEE MEMBERS:** The Lake Management Committee consists of 5 members: Mike Wilding (Chairman), Lisa Willis, Nick Cartwright, Jane Hayman & Graham Valentine (SKPC Councillor). This arrangement complies with our insurer’s (ZURICH) requirements for volunteer workers and public liability, as there is a public footpath around the lake.

**2 CHILDRENS’ ACTIVITY MORNING:** This first activity took place as planned on Thursday morning 27th July and was led by Jane H and Mike W (both hold DBS certificates) and included pond dipping, leaf identification and den building. The attendance at this first venture was very encouraging. 15 children (10 yrs and under) attended together with 9 parents and grandparents. The event was especially welcomed by grandparents! We aim to repeat the event.

**3. MONTHLY INSPECTIONS:** These are carried out by committee members on a rota, to check everything is in order, for example, report an overfull dog waste bin to CDC via CDC website (response by CDC has been quick)

**4. VOLUNTEERS MORNINGS:** These year’s wet then warm summer has produced a lot of tree and scrub growth at the Lake. Our stalwart band of volunteers can cope with the trimming back etc. that is needed to keep the main path clear, but there is some heavy work (including chainsaw work for which we are not insured) to be done during the autumn and winter, which we will contract out to our reliable contractors. Date for the next volunteer morning has not been fixed but should be in later September. Path mowing has been carried out valiantly by Nick Hunt, Nick Cartwright and Mike Wilding using our John Deere mower.

**5. ANNUAL BUDGET:** Since the Committee was formed in September 2017, we have had an annual budget from SKPC of around £1050. Not all of which has been spent each year. Inflation since 2017 has been about 35%, and we would propose an increase in the Lake budget to around £1400 for 23/24. Expenses this year will include, but may not be limited to:

* Tree work (maintaining lake vista areas & removing large dead branches on the S side and over the new wildflower meadow
* Autumn mowing down of the wildflower areas on both the N and S side of the Lake (about 6 in all) and subsequent raking (partly by volunteers)
* Servicing to mower (minor repairs such as refitting drive belt etc.. are done by ourselves
* Electrical repairs to wildlife camera in our owl box
* Winter overseeding in wildflower areas (last winter yellow rattle was successfully sown)
* Shed storage brackets etc ….
* Materials for future activity days (pond dipping insect identification charts for example)
* Some reed cutting/removal

**6. CURRENT LAKE FUNDS HELD WITHIN SKPC BANK ACCOUNT:**

* Remainder of Calor Gas Rural Community Grant £428 (reserved for special projects)
* Donation from closed SK Wine Tasting Society (reserved for Volunteers’ refreshments)

***mjw***  ***11 Sept 23***