

# **Minutes of Somerford Keynes Parish Council Meeting**

## **Village Hall, 12<sup>th</sup> February 2024**

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

**Also present:** CDC Cllr M McKeown (MM), Clerk K. Holdsworth (KH), Graham Shearn (Somerford Keynes Parish Charities) and 3 members of the public attended.

### **1. Apologies**

Cllr J. Whitwell (JW), Cllr M.H-Oldland (MH-O), Cllr N. Hunt (NH),

### **2. Declaration of Interest**

Cllr G Valentine, Cllr H Collins (LME), CDC Cllr M McKeown

### **3. Approval of Minutes of 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024 Meeting**

Proposed HC, seconded MK.

### **4. Public Session**

The following matter was raised:

Barriers and signage are in the verge at the western end of Water Lane following the flooding and road closure.

**Action:** KH to contact Gloucestershire Highways and ask for them to be removed.

### **5. Graham Shearn, Somerford Keynes Parish Charities (SKPC)**

Graham had two requests of the Parish Council.

Firstly, regulations state that the vicar is the chair of SKPC. Given that currently there is no vicar and no fixed timescale as to when there might be one, permission is being sought to enable the Parochial Church Council to appoint a trustee instead. The chair would then be agreed amongst the five trustees.

Secondly, the Parish Council (PC) appoints two of the trustees on a bi-annual basis. Graham sought confirmation that the PC are happy to continue to do this.

The PC agreed to both points, Graham will send further information on SKPC to the PC.

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

Cllr L Spivey's report is in Appendix One.

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

Cllr M McKeown's report is in Appendix Two.

## **8. Completed Actions from Previous Meeting**

- 8.1** HC has met with GCC Highways, CDC Flooding and Lisa Spivey. This has provided more useful input to the report she is preparing.
- 8.2** The PC wrote to the Planning Officer regarding planning application 23/035689/FUL. Changes have been made to the application and we have received a letter from a parishioner thanking us for our help.
- 8.3** AC reviewed the NDP. Its contents remain relevant (it runs to 2031) and there is no need to update it. A number of the Community Proposals are being actively progressed.  
The value of the NDP was seen in how it was given consideration in relation to the objections to the proposed development on Land to the South East of Ashlands House.
- 8.4** NH engaged with Field Farm owners regarding screening of the new developments. Several trees have already been planted and further trees are now onsite awaiting planting though clearly these will take time to grow.
- 8.5** AC attended a Village Hall Committee meeting to explore whether CIL money might be invested in the Village Hall.
- 8.6** AC drafted a note to parishioners explaining the rationale for precept increase.
- 8.7** KH/AC have submitted the 2024/2025 precept application to CDC.
- 8.8** KH/AC met with GCC Highways regarding the overgrown hedge by the Sculpture Park. They agreed it needs addressing and is their responsibility. It has been added to their works programme for the new year (starts April 2024) so may take some time to resolve.
- 8.9** MK has written to CDC expressing concerns on Planning Application 23/02209/FUL around waste capacity for new bathroom and changing facilities.
- 8.10** AC has drafted proposed PC objectives which have been agreed, see section 12.

## **9. Ongoing and New Actions**

- 9.1 Shorcote Flood Mitigation**  
MK has been in contact with Jason Betty. He has now written to the Enforcement Team and hopefully there will be a visit this week.  
**Action:** MK to follow up.
- 9.2 Interest Earning Bank Account.**  
KH/GV have made good progress in the move to online banking which will enable interest earning accounts to be looked at.  
**Action:** KH/GV to pursue.

### **9.3 Community Speed Camera**

The project is progressing slowly as following a change in Project Manager by Gloucestershire Constabulary they now need to appoint a new contractor to undertake installations.

**Action:** MHO to provide updates when received.

### **9.4 Mains Sewerage**

Interest in this was identified in the community survey.

**Action:** MHO has confirmed the process by which to engage Thames Water and will draft a letter on behalf of the PC.

### **9.5 Active Travel Fund & Missing Link**

Active Travel Fund applications will be reviewed on February 23<sup>rd</sup> so there should be some feedback shortly after that.

A meeting of the local stakeholders is in the process of being arranged in order to progress missing link plans.

**Action:** NH to continue to progress and update.

### **9.6 Shared Green Space**

Interest in this was identified in the community survey, MHO has identified a short list of possible locations.

**Action:** MHO to contact landowners to ascertain their interest in selling land.

### **9.7 Flooding**

HC is continuing to meet with stakeholders and conducting research to build the most complete picture.

**Action:** Aim is to complete and issue a report in March.

### **9.8 Residential Ponds Initiative**

HC attended a meeting regarding the CDC Ponds in Residential Garden Project.

There will be an event on July 13<sup>th</sup> to include a presentation at the village hall and activities at the village lake.

SK has been chosen as the first village for this initiative.

**Action:** HC to provide further details as the time approaches.

### **9.9 Cotswold Lake Trust rebranding**

NH is representing the PC at a meeting with parish councils, Cotswold Lake Trust and local businesses on 21<sup>st</sup> February.

**Action:** NH to provide updates.

## **10. Water Lane Flooding**

Further to the recent update sent by the PC we can confirm that the work to clear the blocked drain has been completed by Gloucestershire Highways. It was good to see that the subsequent heavy rainfall did not cause any issues in Water Lane.

The PC are the grateful for the support of MM and LS (who enabled some funding to be released for the work) as well as residents will good local knowledge.

## **11. Community Infrastructure Levy Investments**

It is a priority to identify ways of investing this in line with the criteria previously agreed though thus far we have no concrete proposals.

Parishioners are invited to share their ideas

**Action:** KH to contact neighbouring PCs to understand how they have invested such funds.

## **12. Objectives**

The following are agreed as the objectives of the Parish Council for 2024;

1. Maintain the character of the parish in line with the Neighbourhood Development Plan and feedback from the most recent community survey.
2. Develop a sustainable financial plan for the next five years.
3. Document a flood protection plan for the parish.
4. Invest the Community Infrastructure Levy funds in line with agreed investment guidelines.
5. Maintain positive relationships and open dialogue with parishioners and other local stakeholders such as District and County Councils as well as the Cotswold Lakes Trust and other local bodies.
6. Seek opportunities to enhance the community infrastructure; includes utilities, pavements and footpaths.

## **13. Annual General Meeting**

Agreed that we should have this in May.

**Action:** KH to finalise a date and look at guest speakers.

**Action:** AC to circulate proposed agenda.

## **14. Village Litter Pick**

Agreed in principle that this should be done, provisional date is April 6<sup>th</sup>.

**Action:** KH to look into matters of borrowing equipment, insurance and disposing of litter collected prior to formally advertising.

## **15. Lower Mill Estate Winter Nature Walk**

This was arranged by James Pointing, LME Ecologist. Positive feedback was received from attendees so it may be repeated in spring and summer.

## **16. Correspondence**

### **16.1 Ordnance Survey**

KH has renewed online Ordnance Survey Mapping for use by the PC.

### **16.2 Fibre Optic Broadband**

A letter of warning was received from Willersey village regarding disruption to them by Full Fibre Ltd aka Fibre Heroes installing poles and overhead cables for Fibre Optic Broadband.

### **16.3 EA Pump at Neigh Bridge**

HC has discussed this with the Environment Agency and will be included in her flooding report.

### **16.4 First Aid Training**

We have received emails complimenting Marcus on the First Aid Training which KH has forwarded onto him.

## **17. Planning Items**

### **23/03906/FUL**

Full Application for Variation of conditions 2 (Approved drawings), 3 (occupancy), 9 (External Lighting), 14 (Landscaping) and compliance of conditions 17 (Drainage), 18 (Foul Drainage), 19 (Electric Vehicle Charging) and 20 (Cycle Storage) of permission 21/02705/FUL - The erection of 17 detached holiday units within Minety Lake South West (also referred to as Barberry Lake); the erection of three detached holiday units within Lakeshore Reserve West; amendments to the water's edge of Minety Lake South West; ancillary buildings, provision for new landscaping and revised ecological areas, visitor parking and vehicular access at Plots 14, 15 And 16 Lower Mill Estate Somerford Keynes Gloucestershire

**No Objection**

### **24/00009/FUL**

Full Application for Demolition of existing rear extension and conservatory, erection of replacement single storey extension at Lower Mill Cottage Mill Lane Somerford Keynes Cirencester Gloucestershire

**No Objection**

## **18. Financial Matters**

### **Income**

None

### **Outgoings**

£10 gift of wine for Marcus Gibbons

£400 Chainsaw work at Village Lake

## **19. Any Other Business**

Marcus Gibbons has very kindly offered to do another First Aid Training Course, date to follow.

The meeting closed at 9.10 pm

**Date of next meeting: Monday 11<sup>th</sup> March 2024 at 7.30 pm**

**Appendix One**  
**Report from Cllr Lisa Spivey**  
**GCC Report**  
**Jan/Feb 2024**

**Highways and Flooding**

I have been very busy with all matters highways and localised flooding. I believe that the majority of the most urgent issues are in hand, with action planned, being taken or been taken. Please let me know if there are any flooding issues that you need some help with.

It's "pot hole" season and I am very aware of the general state of dis-repair on our local road network.

The "Fix My Street" tool is the most efficient way of reporting potholes, broken drain covers, overgrown hedges and a large number of highways related issues, including fly-tipping and pavement issues.

<https://fixmystreet.gloucestershire.gov.uk/>

It's important to log the issues as that way should an incident occur, then there is a trail to follow on when the repair was made (or not!).

I am working with the local highways manager, Richard Gray who retires at the end of March, and his successor, Gill Portlock on identifying areas where my councillor "Highways Local" funds can be best used in the new financial year, so do let me know if there are small schemes you think are relevant.

I continue to lobby for more funding (and a different, non quantitative set of criteria) for our rural roads. It often feels like the big towns get all the money and we are forgotten because the numbers don't stack up.

**Budget Setting**

The County Council will set its budget for the financial year 24/25 on the 21<sup>st</sup> February. The budget is presented as a growth budget in that, at £610 million, it is more than the previous year, but this does not take into consideration the inflationary and staff pay pressures which mean that, at best, this is a standstill budget.

As in previous years, Adult Social Care and Children's Services take a whopping 75% of the total budget, leaving very little in real terms to deal with the many, many other services the County Council delivers.

This pressure is not unique to Gloucestershire and I am sure you will be aware of mounting national pressure on councils across the UK to balance their budgets whilst delivering core services.

### **Corporate Peer Review**

The County Council recently underwent a Corporate Peer Challenge where officers and lead members from other authorities come along to review the council and evaluate how it is working against expected standards. This is conducted over a number of days with many staff and councillors being interviewed about their various dealings with the Council. The peer group is seen as a critical friend and offers an overview at the end of the visit with a report following with recommendations.

Key areas for improvement at GCC include staff IT which is often cited as a reason for leaving at exit interviews, a clearer vision of what the council stands for and wants to achieve via its partnership working, a need to ensure that proper scrutiny can be carried out by being much more open about forward plans and timing of scrutiny and decision making, better strategic and greater corporate leadership, valuing employees and ensuring that equality, diversity and inclusion are truly embraced by the Council.

### **Bus Task and Finish Group**

The bus working group which I was on last year published its full report ahead of January's cabinet meeting.

This was a fascinating group to be part of and the recommendations to Cabinet include some simple quick wins which I hope the council will deploy. These include a multi-modal map showing real time connections for different types of transport, and surveys on bus use and what the barriers are to increased use.

Here is a link to the final report:

<https://glostext.gloucestershire.gov.uk/documents/s97237/Final%20Report%20-%20Improving%20Gloucestershires%20Bus%20Services%20Scrutiny%20Task%20Group.pdf>

### **The Robin**

The Council will be expanding its offer of Direct Response Transport (DRT) via The Robin service in the South Cotswolds hopefully late summer. This scheme has now been running successfully in the north Cotswolds and the Forest of Dean and I have been keen to see it used in this area.

<https://www.gloucestershire.gov.uk/transport/the-robin/>



## **Appendix Two**

Somerford Keynes Parish Council Report

Councillor Mike McKeown

Cotswold District Council, Kemble Ward

### **Flooding in Water lane**

Following the CCTV survey by GCC the source of the flooding was found to be the ditch being silted up where the drain empties into it

CDC investigated who the riparian landowner was for the ditch, as they are normally responsible for clearing the ditch adjoining their land.

However it was discovered that land that this ditch adjoins is not owned by anyone - technically it's Crown Estate land

- GCC accepted to clear - the ditch in this case

- Following heavy rain the drains seem to be flowing freely

- Thanks to GCC, CDC, the PC, Lisa Spivey (our county councillor) and residents for helping resolve this

### **CDC Local Plan**

The new local plan is now at the consultation phase.

Have your say, closes 24 March: [‘Green to the Core’ Local Plan consultation begins \(cotswold.gov.uk\)](#)

### **Cirencester Town Centre Master Plan**

Consultation now open, closing 17 March

[From Roman to renewal - honouring our past, celebrating our present and inspiring our future \(cotswold.gov.uk\)](#)

### **Cotswold Home Interiors Festival**

Hosted by CDC, funded by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund.

**Saturday 2 March 2024 from 10am – 5pm at The Corn Hall in Cirencester.**

[Calling all home interior fanatics! \(cotswold.gov.uk\)](#)

### **Repairs to The Old Station**

[Council to repair The Old Station as future for the building continues to be explored \(cotswold.gov.uk\)](#)

Funding granted to keep the building safe and serviceable

CDC is exploring how the building can be used going forward without putting a strain on public finances

### [Crowdfund Cotswolds](#)

Event to help with ideas and how to use on 22 February 12-1pm - online  
Open for small and large crowdfund projects (few £100's to many £1,000s)  
[From Ideas to Impact: Unleash Your Imagination with Crowdfund Cotswold](#)

### [New Parliamentary Boundaries for next General Election](#)

This is now setup. We are in the new South Cotswold constituency  
Note: This does not make any differences to the Cotswold District Council or Gloucestershire County Council boundaries

<https://news.cotswold.gov.uk/news/changes-to-parliamentary-boundariesacross-the-cotswold-district-to-come-into-effect-for-next-general-election>

### [UK Shared Prosperity Fund](#)

£296,450 has been allocated to a range of projects across the Cotswolds  
[More money invested into the Cotswolds](#)

### [Car Parking Consultation](#)

Now open until 26 February  
[Views on parking in Cotswolds sought from residents](#)

### [Housing Strategy Consultation](#)

Now open until 21 February  
[Housing strategy seeks to tackle housing affordability crisis \(cotswold.gov.uk\)](#)

### [CDC's New Corporate Plan Approved](#)

This sets the priorities for the current term, up to the elections in 2028. It was approved at the recent cabinet meeting.

There is a strong focus on Climate Change action, which is my area of responsibility. Together with delivering good services, delivering housing, supporting communities, supporting the economy,

[Annex A - Our Cotswolds Our Plan.pdf](#)

[Annex B - Our Cotswolds Our Plan- Action Plan 2024.pdf](#)