

Minutes of Somerford Keynes Parish Council Meeting

Village Hall, 10th March 2025

Present: Cllr J. Whitwell (JW), Cllr N. Hunt (NH), Cllr M.H-Oldland (MHO), Cllr G. Valentine (GV), Hilary Collins (HC), CDC Cllr M McKeown (MM),

Also present: Clerk K. Holdsworth (KH), M Wilding (Village Lake), No members of the public

1. Apologies

CC Cllr L Spivey (LS), Cllr A. Clark (AC), Cllr M. Keegan (MK),

2. Declaration of Interest

Cllr G Valentine (GV), Cllr H Collins (HC)

3. Public Session

Nothing raised.

4. Approval of Minutes of February 10th 2025 Meeting

Proposed JW, seconded MHO

5. Report from County Cllr L. Spivey

Report in Appendix One

6. Report from District Cllr M.McKeown

Report in Appendix Two

7. Actions from Previous Meeting

7.1 Extending Footpath at North End of Village

NH has engaged with several Streetworks Accredited suppliers to obtain costs for extending the footpath at the north of the village from Elm View to Field Farm. To date one quotation has been received we are still awaiting a second quotation.

Action: NH to continue to seek additional quotations.

AC engaged with the Sculpture Park to see if they would be willing to contribute to the costs of the footpath if the PC went ahead, at this present time it is not of interest to them.

7.2 Lower Mill Direction Sign at top of Mill Lane

We are still awaiting the sign for Mill Lane.

Action: NH & GV to chase

7.3 Lower Mill Estate Support

Andrew Bonner from LME has helped with clearing the ground around the sheds at the Village Lake. The PC would like to thank the LME groundworks team for all their hard work.

7.4 Parish Council Standing Orders, Code of Conduct & Financial Regulations

KH has now uploaded these to the Parish Website and can be found under Parish Council Statutory Documents.

7.5 Software Security

KH has now changed the software security to Bitdefender.

7.6 Tree Debris

KH has chased GCC again regarding the tree debris on the verge between Mill Lane and Neigh Bridge, they will chase their contractors.

Depending on the findings it may be useful to speak to neighbouring landowners for their help if needed.

7.7 Clearance around Village Lake

See point 7.3.

8. Matters Discussed

8.1 Finance and Governance

KH & GV are working towards the financial year end and auditing.

KH & GV to check Cil monies held in our Current Account to see if we need to transfer monies from Savings Account to cover CIL committed projects.

8.2 Flooding

MK will report on the work by Hills on the ditches around Shorncote at the next meeting.

Action: MK to retain a watching brief.

Kiosk Neigh Bridge

HC has written to James Spicer regarding the broken cabinet by Neigh Bridge. He reported that funding will start in April and he will keep us informed when he has a clearer idea on dates.

Action: HC to update when she has more information

Grips – Spine Road

HC has written to GCC regarding the cutting of the grips on the Spine Road. They have reported this is on the list for potential work for the coming financial year but they feel

it may need more than cutting grips so are looking into the possibility of putting in some drains.

Action: HC will keep monitoring.

Mapping

HC has looked further into “Parish Online” to use for mapping of the parish flooding, drainage etc. We are able to get a free 3 month trial and the cost of subscription after that is around £60 per year.

Action: HC to sign up for a 3 month free trail

8.3 Village Litter Pick

This will be held on **Saturday 29th March 2025 between 10.30 – 12.30.**

Please contact skpcclerk@gmail.com if you are able to attend, (this gives KH an idea of numbers for the equipment and refreshments).

Action: KH to finalise details and buy refreshments.

9. Community Infrastructure Levy Projects

9.1 Village Hall Energy and Infrastructure Upgrade

The works are now completed and the charging point installed.

9.2 Bus Shelter and Notice Board

The hard standing area will be installed on March 17th and the shelter will be erected during week commencing March 31st.

Heal Joinery has started on the notice board which will be installed at the back of the bus shelter.

Action: JW to continue to progress.

9.3 Swings at Neigh Bridge

NH has been in contact with Ben Welbourn at Cotswold Lake Trust to see whether works on the swings could be brought forward, NH is still awaiting a reply.

Action: NH to continue to progress.

9.4 Church Staircase

The Diocesan Advisory Committee meeting has now taken place however, as the Church is a Grade 2 listing the church does need more information and wants a report covering design issues from a Church Architect. This will cost up to £1500. The PC have been asked if this can be included within the CIL funding.

The PC voted to approve the funding of the report but with caveats that the PC will only fund monies committed already to the staircase, if more money is needed the PC will take a review on this project and that all future maintenance, insurance costs, etc on the staircase must be managed by the Church.

9.5 Village Lake

MW has been in touch with Made in Oak for quotes for a Shelter over one of the benches.

10. Planning

25/00044/FUL

Full Application for Erection of oak framed garden room at 1 Arlingdon Fields Somerford Keynes Cirencester Gloucestershire GL7 6BL

Action: The PC asked the Planning Officer for clarification on the land and any restrictions that may stand. No more action taken.

25/00422/FUL

Full Application for Variation of condition 20 (specific time/occupation) to permission 04/03278/FUL - Replacement of permitted facilities building with 3 holiday units at 103 Clearwater Village Lower Mill Estate Somerford Keynes Gloucestershire GL7 6BG

No Objection

25/00354/FUL

Full Application for Retention of timber clad air conditioning unit (retrospective). Removal of hot tub to regularise approved plans at 3 Minety Lake Lower Mill Estate Somerford Keynes Cirencester Gloucestershire

No Objection

25/00421/FUL

Full Application for Variation of condition 17 (specific time/occupation) of permission 98.01495 - 395 holiday homes, country club, watersports lakes and associated leisure facilities at 70 Mill Village Horseshoe Lower Mill Estate Somerford Keynes Gloucestershire

No Objection

25/00532/SPANOT

Prior Approval Notific'n - solar panels for Prior notification for solar panel installation, including electric vehicle charging point to be installed at the above address on the south facing pitched tiles roof. at Pike House 50 Mill Village Lower Mill Lane Somerford Keynes Cirencester

No Objection

25/00354/FUL

Full Application for Retention of timber clad air conditioning unit (retrospective) at 3 Minety Lake Lower Mill Estate Somerford Keynes Cirencester Gloucestershire

No Objection

25/00565/FUL

Full Application for Variation of condition 20 (occupancy) to allow 12, 14, 16, 19 and 22 Clearwater Village to be used as holiday homes all year round of permission 02/01740/FUL - 90 holiday units, six pools, pool pavilions and two tennis courts at Lower Mill Estate Mill Lane Somerford Keynes Cirencester Gloucestershire

No Objection

25/00229/FUL

Full Application for Extension of deck, addition of hot tub and external wood burning flue to side elevation at 49 Minety Lake Lower Mill Estate Somerford Keynes Cirencester Gloucestershire

No Objection

11. Correspondence

Missing & Broken signs – KH has passed onto Gloucestershire Highways.

12. February Income and Expenditure**Income**

Interest Earned February 25 £233.51

Total Income

£233.51

Expenditure**Clerks Training**

£45.00

Village Lake

£185.00 (Gate Counter - Build Back Better Grant)
£90.86 (Vinyl & Hooks - Build Back Better Grant)
£8.39 (Fuel)
£650.00 (Tree & Landscaping works)

Total Expenditure

£979.25

CIL Expenditure**Total CIL Spend**

None

Transfers

None

Petty Cash Expenditure

None

13. Any Other Business

Dates for Diary

The Village Litter Pick will be held on Saturday 29th March 2025

The AGM will be held on Friday 9th May 2025.

Please can you let skpcclerk@gmail.com know if you would like to attend either of these events to help with organisation and refreshments.

Meeting closed at 8.47pm

Date of next meeting Monday 14th April 2025

Appendix One

Cllr Lisa Spivey

GCC Report

Spring 2025

Please find a general update on areas of interest. For specific issues or casework please email me directly or give me a call.

Lisa.spivey@gloucestershire.gov.uk

01285 653405

Gloucestershire County Council

Highways and Flooding

I continue to be very busy with all matters highways and localised flooding. This winter has been worse than ever with 3 major storms in September, November and January causing widespread flooding affecting a number of properties across the South Cerney division.

It's clear that the highways drainage network in particular is not able to cope with the type of rain we are experiencing – short, but very heavy downpours – and that work is going to have to be done to mitigate for this. I brought a budget amendment at the budget meeting in February asking for £500,000 to begin this work. Unfortunately, that amendment was rejected by the administration, but I will continue to lobby for improvements in our area.

In many places, urgent CCTV surveys need to be done to establish what the problems are before a plan can be put in place to fix it. I have been working with the local highways manager, Gill Portlock to ensure that those CCTV surveys are programmed for when the water levels subside. This won't be a quick fix, but it is something I am keen to see progress on.

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 was disappointed that the multi-million £ Highways Maintenance Contract was extended for a further 4 years with Ringway, the current contractor. I don't believe that this contract is delivering good quality repairs and value for money for residents, with many potholes needing to be re-fixed within weeks, only a few holes repaired at a time and signs left abandoned in verges for months (or even longer!). I continue to press for

better contract management and monitoring and accountability of the contractor to ensure a better deal for local tax payers.

I am pleased to see that many of the roads that I have campaigned for comprehensive resurfacing on have been added to the capital programme for next financial year, but I am aware that there are still many, many more that require upgrading.

Local Government Reorganisation and Devolution

The government published its English Devolution paper on the 16th December 2024. The paper included the framework for devolving power and funding from central government to local authorities which was expected, but also stated that in order to become a "Strategic Authority", any area with a "two tier" system would need to go through the process of unitarisation in order to unlock those devolution deals. This means that in Gloucestershire, the 6 district, borough and city councils will be abolished a new unitary authorities/2 authorities will be established to deliver all services under 1 umbrella.

This means a huge amount of work and upheaval for council staff whilst the sector grapples with huge finding issues and trying to transform service delivery.

Gloucestershire is evaluating whether 1 mega council or 2 smaller unitary authorities would be the best solution with interim proposals going to MHCLG on the 21st March and final submissions by the 28th November.

No matter what the final outcome is, I believe that the most important factor is that decision making should remain/be more local to communities, that there must be strong governance structures and accountability, and that service deliver should continue on a journey of improvement.

Budget

The County Council set its budget for 25/26 at its annual budget meeting on the 19th February. The budget now totals £665million with the largest chunk of that going on Children's and Adults' social care. Funding has been set aside for a much needed new special school and 3 new care homes, but many of the directorates including highways, public health and transport didn't see the investment required to begin a journey of change which was disappointing.

New Chief Executive

Jo walker was appointed as the new chief executive following the retirement of Pete Bungard who has been in post for 12 years.

Jo started her career at GCC and left in 2018 to take on the chief exec role in north Somerset. She has a wide range of experience within the council and has been pivotal to securing inward investment in north Somerset. She was the standout candidate in a strong field and I am sure she will be a real asset to Gloucestershire in the coming years.

Upcoming Meetings

Wednesday 12th March 10am Full Council

Appendix Two

Cllr Mike McKeown Report

Monthly Report: March 2025

Prepared by Mike McKeown (mike.mckeown@cotswold.gov.uk)

Councillor for the Kemble Ward

Cabinet Member for Climate Change and Sustainability

Cotswold District Council (CDC)

Kemble Ward Councillor Related

Village Halls and Community Buildings Grants Panel

Installations are scheduled for the various aspects of the upgrades including improvised heating and lighting and new EV chargers, critical to meet the March end of year deadline.

West Lane Kemble

The streetlight remains broken, I've been chasing the developer and GCC. The developer has confirmed they have a date from National Grid for the required power connection. However, this has not happened, and the developer has been chased again by the residents.

GCC say there is limited budget for additional street lighting so this would need to be looked at by the PC to partly or fully fund - Mike to discuss with Kemble & Ewen PC.

Kemble Wick Flooding

Meeting held between GCC, CDC, Aura (solar farm) and Bathurst Estate. The report from this has been shared with residents and Kemble & Ewen PC. The key conclusion was to contact consultants to get quotes for design work for flood prevention measures. I've contacted the names provided by the CDC Flood officer and awaiting quotes.

Rappor have visited site on Thursday and will provide a quote soon.

K-Tan have provided a quote of £3,350 + VAT

Windmill Lane Kemble Cladding

This was raised to me by the Kemble and Ewen Parish council. Having checked this would need planning permission if it alters the appearance of the building and there are options for cladding that would match Cotswold stone, but this would add cost.

KCG Lease

I am chasing the CDC CFO about the end date for the 50-year lease.

Cycle Path

Sustrans Contract Signed for Kemble - Cirencester Cycle path costing feasibility study - required for GCC to apply for construction funding.

Solar Farm

25MW by Spratsgate lane crossroads to Ewen / South Cerney has been announced for pre-planning consultation, and I visited the site along with Kemble and Ewen Parish council:

<https://www.aurapower.com/projects/furzen-leaze>

CDC Related

Drive and Thrive Event

This event was held on 6th March in Cirencester with three parts

- EVs in Cirencester Market Square for viewing and test drives
- Home Energy Efficiency Trade show with local and national suppliers in The Corn Hall
- Talks on both EVs and Home Energy Efficiency also in the Cornhall

The event was well attended and intended to help and encourage residents to adopt home energy efficiency measures and Evs to cut their energy costs, make their homes warm and cozy and adopt Evs - transport and homes are the biggest sources of CO2 in the Cotswolds.

Thanks for volunteers from the Cotswold Climate Action Network who helped with the event: <https://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=61567060910915>

Home Energy Efficiency

CDCs Home Energy Efficiency officer is available to do talks (will be booking on soon) and do free home energy efficiency surveys and advice. Residents can contact her at: <Justine.Mallinson@cotswold.gov.uk>

Gloucestershire has selected <https://furbnow.com/gloucestershire/> to provide paid energy efficiency advice and project management

Joe Harris - Standing Down as Leader

After 6 years

Effective from Annual meeting in May

Remaining a CDC and GCC councillor and Vice Chair and Leader of the LibDem group at the Local Government Association.

LibDem councillor election to choose a new leader

<https://news.cotswold.gov.uk/news/cotswold-district-council-leader-to-stand-down-after-six-years-in-role>

CDC News

Grants Up for Grabs: £1000s Available for Cotswold Businesses and Community Initiatives

<https://news.cotswold.gov.uk/news/grants-up-for-grabs-gbp-1000s-available-for-cotswold-businesses-and-community-initiatives>

Cotswold District Council Helps Vulnerable Residents Secure Over £88,000 of Unclaimed Benefits

<https://news.cotswold.gov.uk/news/cotswold-district-council-helps-vulnerable-residents-secure-over-gbp-88-000-of-unclaimed-benefits>

Cotswold District Council Leader to stand down after six years in role

<https://news.cotswold.gov.uk/news/cotswold-district-council-leader-to-stand-down-after-six-years-in-role>

Illegal Dumping Leads to Successful Duty of Care Prosecution for Cotswold District Council

<https://news.cotswold.gov.uk/news/illegal-dumping-leads-to-successful-duty-of-care-prosecution-for-cotswold-district-council>

Cotswold Homes and Interiors Festival Returns to Cirencester

<https://news.cotswold.gov.uk/news/cotswold-homes-and-interiors-festival-returns-to-cirencester>

Cotswold Residents Slash Energy Bills with Solar Power

<https://news.cotswold.gov.uk/news/cotswold-residents-slash-energy-bills-with-solar-power>

Become a Flood Hero: Join the Cotswolds Volunteer Flood Warden Scheme Today!

<https://news.cotswold.gov.uk/news/become-a-flood-hero-join-the-cotswolds-volunteer-flood-warden-scheme-today>

Cotswold District Council issues £500 Fixed Penalty Notice (FPN) for littering offence

<https://news.cotswold.gov.uk/news/cotswold-district-council-issues-gbp-500-fixed-penalty-notice-fpn-for-littering-offence>

Cotswold District Council prioritises local shoppers with first hour parking freeze

<https://news.cotswold.gov.uk/news/cotswold-district-council-prioritises-local-shoppers-with-first-hour-parking-freeze>