

SOUTHOE AND MIDLOE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of Southoe and Midloe Parish Council held in the VILLAGE HALL, SOUTHOE on WEDNESDAY, 4 November 2015 at 7.30 pm.

PRESENT: Mrs S Penton - Chairman
Mr D Felce - Vice Chairman
Mr A Marnes
Mr M Rawson
Mr D Saw.

Mrs N Webster - Parish Clerk.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: District Councillor T Hayward (*left at 8.30 pm*) and one member of the public.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were submitted and accepted on behalf of Parish Councillors I Davies and Mrs H Rampley and County Councillor Mrs J Wisson.

92. MINUTES

The Minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

93. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

With regard to Item No 75 (a) of the Minutes of the meeting held on 7 October 2015, the Chairman read out the following statement –

“Councillor Marnes seemed to be expecting something from me between meetings on the matter he brought up at the September meeting – Item No 72 (c) – regarding my being upset due to his unhelpful attitude. He brought up the matter at the next public meeting in October knowing full well I had already given my apologies for absence for that meeting. He chose both public meetings to discuss the subject and, therefore, it is correct to proceed with this at a later public meeting.

In my email to him on 18 August I pointed out that his unhelpfulness in criticising everything I do is upsetting and bordering on harassment and in so doing he has even contradicted himself as follows – *‘In response to my request to him for the draft letter to the bank for transferring funds between our accounts he attached the draft form to his email to me of 4 August. He copied it to the rest of the Councillors pointing out that three signatures are required to complete the transfer and that he understood that the letter wouldn’t be accepted for paying anyone else. However, in his email to all Councillors on 14 August he referred to the request to transfer funds saying he hadn’t seen any request from either the Clerk or the Chairman for this. I had asked him to send me the draft transfer letter, which he did on 4 August so why he would deny all knowledge ten days later I really don’t know.’*

We, as Parish Council, are here to represent the public and it is not in the interest of the public to continue this discussion. Enough has been said and we move straight on to the next item.”

94. MEMBERS’ INTERESTS

No new declarations of interests were received.

The meeting was closed for the next item.

95. (a) Public Participation

As a result of the County Council’s cost saving proposition to switch off a number of street lights in local villages between the hours of 12 midnight - 6 am being discussed at a recent meeting of the St Neots Town Centre Initiative Group, Ms A Saward drew Members’ attention to this proposal. The Chairman was pleased to inform those present that the Parish Council had already received a letter from CCC dated 13 July 2015 confirming that the village, at the moment, would not be affected.

(b) District Councillor’s Update

District Councillor T Hayward covered the following topics during his update:-

Signed by the Chairman:

..... 2015

(i) **A1 Matters**

- Following discussion at the Parish Council meeting held on 7 October 2015 regarding speeding fines, clarification was sought from Ms Sward on whether these were in fact issued on every occasion. District Councillor Hayward confirmed that he had now established that all drivers found exceeding the set speed limit either paid a fine or attended a driver safety course. During the three-month period ending September 2015, 743 speeding tickets had been issued.
- A study to explore options for improving the A1 in the East of England had been announced.
- It was hoped that arrangements for organising a pressure group consisting local organisations/bodies from Sandy upwards would be set up at the District Councillor's meeting with Jonathan Djanogly, MP on 6 November 2015.
- The Highways England representative at the A1 Safety Advisory Group Meeting held on 20 October 2015 had been very helpful.

(See also Minute No. 99 post)

- (ii) The contract for the A428/A421 Strategy Study had just been awarded
- (iii) The viability of providing a rail service between Cambridge and Oxford was under discussion.
- (iv) Views on the planned A14 Cambridge to Huntingdon route should be made known to Stuart Bell at Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC).
- (v) HDC was currently undertaking a review of its electoral arrangements *ie should it change to whole council elections every four years or retain the existing elections by thirds system?*
- Members expressed their preference for the current system as it allowed for continuity without sudden change.
- (vi) The outcome of the Cambridgeshire County Council (CCC) boundary review was yet to be announced.
- (vii) 2016/17 Council budgets were currently being prepared.

The meeting was re-opened.

96. CODE OF CONDUCT

A number of completed Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPI) forms were handed to the Parish Clerk in response to a request from the Monitoring Officer at HDC. Parish Councillor Felce expressed his concerns regarding completing such a form but District Councillor Hayward confirmed that all District Councillors had undertaken a similar exercise and it could be regarded as a form of safe guard to ensure that no undue influences were applied during consideration of agenda items.

97. VILLAGE SECURITY AND POLICING MATTERS

CCTV

Members were informed that although permission had been granted to place the camera on the lamp post, no further communication had been received, as yet, from the Diocese of Ely Registrar in London.

98. HIGHWAY MATTERS

(a) **Rectory Lane – Remedial work: Overgrown Hedges and Blocked Ditch**

Further to the Parish Council's reinstatement request that the CCC Highways Team determine/contact responsible parties regarding remedial work required in connection with overgrown hedges and a blocked ditch in Rectory Lane, Mr I Winfield, Local Highways Officer had responded. A site meeting had been suggested and Parish Councillor D Saw offered to organise this.

Attention was drawn to the fact that no progress had been made on the earlier submissions. Members expressed their concerns based mainly on health and safety reasons. If appropriate work was delayed any longer a serious accident was likely to occur. In order to highlight the situation, District Councillor Hayward undertook to bring the matter to the attention of Jonathan Djanogly, MP at their forthcoming meeting.

Signed by the Chairman:

..... 2015

(b) **Community Gritting**

As requested, completed 2014/15 registration forms were passed to the Parish Clerk. It was confirmed that an agreed route map had already been forwarded to the County Council.

Parish Councillor M Rawson updated Members on the current position regarding the broken salt spreader. Although Mr D Vacher, the Network Management Officer had arranged for a new drive belt to be available week commencing Monday. 10 November 2015, Councillor Rawson expressed concern that this could not be easily replaced.

99. A1 MATTERS

District Councillor Hayward reported that there could not be static speed cameras placed in the 50 mph area but investigations were being made comprising average speed cameras over a whole route rather than in areas where speed related problems occurred.

The Minutes of the A1 Safety Advisory Group meeting held on 20 October 2015 had been previously circulated to Members.

(Minute No. 95 (b) (i) ante also refers).

100. FINANCE MATTERS

(a) **Accounts for Payment**

The Parish Clerk had previously circulated a statement detailing payments made since the last meeting, namely:-

£			
Chq 896	3,079.00	East Anglian Windows & Doors	Final payment re installation of new windows and doors at the Village Hall (issued at Parish Council Meeting held on 07 10 15 – Minute No 84 refers)
Chq 897	750.00	Southoe PCC	Contribution to Church's Insurance Premium (issued at Parish Council Meeting held on 07 10 15 – Minute No 85 refers)
DD	20.27	E-on	Village Hall electricity

and those pending

Chq 898	100.00	East Anglian Air Ambulance	Donation (Parish Council Meeting held on 07 10 15 - Minute No. 82 (c) refers)
Chq 899	230.00	R Holdaway	Grass cutting – September 2015
Chq 900	120.00	Perry Parish Council	Councillor Training (Mrs S Penton and A Marnes) – 3 sessions
Chq 901	158.40	N Webster	Parish Clerk's October 2015 Salary
DD	31.98	E-on	Village Hall electricity bill

(b) Arrangements were also made to -

- (i) transfer £5,000 from the Parish Council's Business Reserve Account to its Current Account; and
- (ii) update the NatWest Bank records with the current Chairman's details, namely Mrs Sheila Penton, instead of those of the former Chairman, Parish Councillor Alan Marnes,

101. PLAYING FIELD AND PLAYGROUND MATTERS

The Chairman informed Members that the annual unaccompanied play area inspection report had not, to date, been received.

In addition the following matters were discussed.

(a) **Hedge Cutting Quotations**

The quotation obtained from HDC for cutting all the hedges on the boundary of the playing field and the front car park (Quote No 252 - £424.12 plus VAT) was higher than last year (£300 plus VAT), a second quotation was subsequently requested for cutting the boundary field only (Quote No 253 - £336.29 plus VAT).

During the ensuing discussion, it was agreed that this maintenance work should be undertaken every year. If the existing hedgerow were allowed to grow into trees, it would undoubtedly be more expensive to cut in the future. Both Parish Councillors Felce and Rawson thought that due to the type of hedgerow and the maintenance work involved, the first quotation (No 252) was reasonable.

It was agreed to contact Mr M Chudley, the new Manager at the Operations Division of HDC to seek clarification before proceeding with Quote No 252.

(b) **Rent Review**

Several letters have been received from Savills regarding an outstanding rent review in connection with recreation ground. The current rent amounts to £655 per annum and based on the July 2015 RPI figure it was proposed to increase this to £758.36 per annum.

After careful consideration being given to the matter, it was agreed to accept the revised figure and two copies of the Supplemental Memorandum in connection with an agreement dated 10 July 2000 between the Landlord (*The Chancellor, Masters and Scholars of the University of Oxford as Trustee of the Oxford Funds – OEF Class Account*) and the Tenant (*Southoe and Midloe Parish Council*) were signed by the Chairman on behalf of the Parish Council.

It was suggested that in the future compulsory purchase could be an option.

102. VILLAGE HALL MATTERS

No issues were raised.

103. CHURCH AND BURIAL MATTERS

Following her attendance at a meeting held in the Church, Ms Saward was pleased to report that the new heating system was efficient.

104. PLANNING MATTERS

Community Infrastructure Levy

Councillor Marnes informed Members that this not applicable to the Parish Council at this time as no new housing developments, etc had been proposed or recently built in the village.

105. CONSULTATIONS

(a) **HDC – Review of Electoral Arrangements**

Minute No 95 (b) (v) ante refers.

(b) **Felling Licence Application – Diddington Estate**

Parish Councillor Marnes explained to Members that this application referred to an area of land purposely planted with trees specifically for felling, no objections were raised.

(c) **Riparian Responsibilities for Flood Risk**

Not applicable at present.

(d) **Parking Contraventions in Town and Parish Council Areas**

Members' attention was drawn to an email received on 21 October 2015 regarding the District Council's recent consideration for the possible introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement (CPE) in Huntingdonshire and their consequential request for information regarding parking problem areas.

Although there had been incidents of cars parking on the pavement in the village, it was suggested that PCSO List should be made aware that these problems were now being monitored.

106. MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE AND E-MAILS

In addition to the list of correspondence received by the Parish Council (as at 2 November 2015) being circulated prior to the meeting, details were awaited regarding the possible distribution of the Buckden Roundabout Magazine.

107. ANY OTHER BUSINESS/ITEMS FOR NEXT MEETING

Councillor Rawson drew attention to a crack in a wall located in Thurleigh Close as he thought this could lead to the wall becoming a dangerous hazard. Councillor Marnes offered to speak to the resident.

108. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, 2 December 2015 at 7.30 pm.

The meeting closed at 9.00 pm.