

SOUTHOE AND MIDLOE PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of the meeting of Southoe and Midloe Parish Council held in the VILLAGE HALL, SOUTHOE on WEDNESDAY, 2 September 2015 at 7.30 pm.

PRESENT: Mrs S Penton - Chairman
Mr I Davies
Mr A Marnes
Mr M Rawson - left the meeting at 9.00 pm
Mr D Saw.

Mrs N Webster - Parish Clerk.

ALSO IN ATTENDANCE: One member of the public.

APOLOGIES: Apologies for absence were submitted and accepted on behalf of Ms C List, PCSO, Parish Councillors D Felce and Mrs H Ramply, District Councillor T Hayward and County Councillor Mrs J Wisson.

54. MINUTES

Following the deletion of the last sentence of Item No. 40 (e) namely, "The viaduct would be retained (*Minute No 43 (a) post also refers*)" and the replacement of the word "not" with words "that it would be pointless" in the last sentence of Item No. 53, the Minutes of the meeting held on 8 July 2015 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

55. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

Due to a declared interest by Councillor Mrs Ramply regarding wind farm related matters, it was normal practice to place associated items at the end of the Agenda to enable her to leave the meeting before their consideration. Following a query by Councillor Marnes, it was agreed that the Parish Clerk would make enquiries as whether or not this was necessary. It was suggested that, if permitted, in future she remain present but not partake in any discussion or voting thereon.

56. MEMBERS' INTERESTS

No new declarations of interests were received.

The meeting was closed for the next item.

57. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

A number of issues were raised during this item.

- (a) Ms A Saward was pleased to report –
- (i) **Bell Lane:** Ditch has now been completely cleared.
 - (ii) **Autumn Fayre - Saturday, 5 September 2015:** Generally the responses received have been favourable. Arrangements were in hand for the grass to be cut on 3 September 2015.
- (b) In the absence of District Councillor Hayward, his report had been circulated prior to the meeting.
- (i) **Huntingdonshire District Council (HDC) - Planning services:** As the District Councillor indicated he would be willing to discuss the outcome of his meeting at HDC regarding the above issues at the next meeting, it was agreed to defer consideration until October 2015.
 - (ii) **Fly Tipping:** Attention was drawn to the fact that this had caused numerous problems over the years especially in Rectory Lane and other isolated areas within the village. Councillors concurred that the draft fly tipping notice be approved, placed on the village noticeboard/website and circulated via 'The Grapevine'.

The meeting was re-opened.

58. CODE OF CONDUCT

Councillors were advised that several emails had been received from the District Council regarding outstanding disclosable pecuniary interests (DPI) forms. As a result of updates being received, the Parish Council had

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adopted an amended Code last year. The Monitoring Officer was now requesting the completion and submission of resultant new DPI forms as soon as possible. It was agreed that an email should be sent asking all Members to return their completed forms to the Clerk at the October meeting.

59. VILLAGE SECURITY AND POLICING MATTERS

(a) CCTV, Southoe

Councillor Saw informed Members that following an exchange of numerous emails, on receipt of an approval letter from the Principal Inspector of Historic Buildings for Historic England, the Rector of Southoe, Annette Reed, would be sending the appropriate documentation to the Diocese of Ely Registrar in London in order to have the faculty by the end of September.

(b) Street Lighting

The Chairman reported that a letter dated 13 July 2015 had been received from the Head of Assets and Commissioning at Cambridgeshire County Council informing the Parish Council that County Council owned street lighting columns in the village would not be switched off at off peak times or dimmed any further at this time.

It was agreed that the updated Street Lights Inventory previously circulated should be submitted to the County Council.

(c) “No Cold Calling” Scheme

Ms Saward informed Parish Councillors that a “no cold calling” zone was now in place in the High Street. Information packs had been delivered and signs erected. A discussion took place regarding the difficulty in defining what could be deemed as “cold calling”. It was suggested that “no uninvited caller” signs be placed at all entrances to the village informing everyone that they were now entering a “no uninvited caller” zone.

(d) Monitoring of Car Tyre Vandalism

Two incidents of tyre vandalism had occurred in July. No further cases had been reported.

60. HIGHWAY MATTERS

(a) Local Highway Improvement Initiative - Cambridgeshire County Council

Councillor Saw drew attention to the fact that in the past Highways Depot Open Days had not been very informative nor had a previous application for local highway improvement funding been successful.

(b) Overgrown Hedges

Where the responsibility lay for cutting back overgrown hedges, especially those in Rectory Lane, was highlighted again. Due to the fact that some streetlights have now been affected, further enquiries needed to be made. It was noted, however, that an electricity company had previously undertaken clearance work on a number of lights.

(c) Local Highway Maintenance

To date, work carried out to in-fill potholes appearing in Rectory Lane had been unsatisfactory.

61. A1 MATTERS

(a) District Councillor T Hayward

In his previously circulated report, the District Councillor stated that he was hoping to speak to the area’s local MP, Jonathan Djanogly, sometime during September regarding the future of the A1. A meeting of the A1 Safety Group has been scheduled to take place on 15 September 2015

(b) Overgrown Vegetation

Concerns were again expressed about overgrown vegetation in the A1 central reservations bordering the village and it was agreed to report the need for remedial action to be taken. Councillor Marnes also offered to raise the matter at the forthcoming meeting of A1 Safety Group.

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(c) **Monitoring of Traffic**

As a direct result of forthcoming work on the A14, Councillor Saw raised the question as to whether or not any A1 traffic monitoring would be undertaken.

62. FINANCE MATTERS

(a) **CPALC Training**

An email had been received from Perry Parish Council inquiring if local Councillors would like to attend three training sessions (costing approximately £35 per person/session), covering topics ranging from Meeting procedures, Budgets and Planning issues. Although there was no budget provision for councillor training, sufficient funds existed. Councillors Mrs Penton and Marnes expressed an interest in attending so their attendance was duly authorised.

(b) **Donation – St Neots Museum**

In line with the previous year, it was proposed and seconded by Councillors Davies and Marnes respectively, that a donation of £50 be made to the St Neots Museum. This would entitle residents of Southoe and Midloe to visit the museum free of charge.

(c) **Accounts for Payment**

The Clerk had previously circulated a statement detailing payments made since the last meeting in July 2015, namely

Details	Amount £	Payee	Notes
Chq 884	50.00	Stead, Rob	Web Hosting (01 06 15 – 31 05 16)
Chq 885	95.42	Barnicoat Ltd	Clerking Services (May)
DD	22.19	E-ON	Village Hall
Chq 886	147.20	Webster, N	Clerking Services (July)
Chq 887	340.00	Holdaway, R	Hedges (03 07 15) and Ground Maintenance (07 07 15 and 29 07 15)
Chq 888	770.00	East Anglian Windows & Doors	Village Hall – 20% deposit for replacement windows and doors

(d) **Salary – Parish Clerk**

The Chairman referred to an email dated 26 August 2015 wherein it was suggested that consideration be given to increasing and backdating the clerk's hourly rate of pay. Councillor Marnes explained the reasons for his objections to the proposal, which were mainly based on the skills, knowledge and length of service of the previous post holder compared with the already acknowledged inexperience of the new incumbent. Councillor Mrs Penton stated that the new clerk had however worked in local government for some considerable time and although inexperienced in Parish Council matters it is considered that the new clerk has just as much to offer in other relevant skills and experience. As the matter had not been discussed previously between Councillors regarding a starting point the Chairman had obtained a majority agreement by email, which is now confirmed at this meeting. It was agreed by a majority vote that the new clerk should be paid £9.90 per hour and to be back-dated to the start of her employment with this Parish Council (1st June 2015). Also her salary will be reviewed next April. It was agreed that in future Members should discuss such matters prior to the commencement of a scheduled meeting.

63. PLAYING FIELD AND PLAYGROUND MATTERS

The following items were raised –

(a) **Annual Safety Inspection**

Councillor Mrs Penton informed Members that a reminder had been received from Wicksteed Playgrounds regarding the annual safety inspection. Attention was drawn to the fact that last year's inspection should have been an accompanied one. Councillor Rawson reported that some of the equipment was now getting old but as any remedial work necessary would be highlighted in the inspection/risk assessment report it was agreed to arrange an Unaccompanied Annual Safety Inspection.

(b) **Weed Control**

In the absence of Councillor Felce it was decided that he would be asked to report on this matter at the next meeting. In the meantime it was suggested that any work undertaken should be restricted to the play ground area only.

(c) **Signs**

To date, delivery of the new signs could not be traced so the Chairman requested that the accounts be checked to see if any payment had been processed. It was confirmed, following a query that the "no dogs" notice had been re-instated.

64. VILLAGE HALL MATTERS

Ms Saward was pleased to inform Councillors that the grant application submitted to Huntingdonshire District Council for new doors and windows had been successful. Unfortunately the grant had not been for the total amount required but it was anticipated when the work was completed there would be long-term fuel savings. A presentation evening was to be held on 30 September 2015. As agreed at the Parish Council meeting held on 6 May 2015 and included in the Minutes, all financial payments will be processed through the Parish Council's bank account.

65. CHURCH AND BURIAL MATTERS

Members were acquainted by Councillor Saw that work on the Church heating system would begin week commencing 7 September 2015. It would take approximately three to four weeks to complete and during this time parishioners would use the Village Hall's toilet facilities.

As the Church was now more accessible and consequently being used by an increasing number of residents, Councillor Saw enquired as to whether or not the Parish Council would be willing to pay half the Church's insurance premium (approximately £750.00). Owing to the fact there were only four Members now present it was decided to defer this request to the next meeting.

66. PLANNING MATTERS

**Planning Application 15/01080/HHFUL
8 Lees Lane, Southoe: Installation of external wall insulation on front and rear of property**

Details of this application had been circulated and approved by Councillors during the summer recess.

67. INSURANCE

Parish Councillors had been forwarded a copy of the renewal insurance quotation received from Came and Company. Paying particular attention to street furniture, a discussion took place on whether or not any changes were required. After taking into consideration existing seating/equipment in the play area, waste bins, lych gate, etc it was unanimously agreed to renew the policy without amendment for a further twelve months at a cost of £708.93. (See also Minute No. 72 (b).)

68. HOUSING MATTERS

CLT East - Call for Land and Luminus Parish Councillor Survey

Following correspondence recently received from local organisations/bodies in connection with housing issues in the area, Councillor Marnes brought Members' attention to the fact that young people in particular continued to find it difficult to obtain property in the village. In the event of any suitable land being earmarked, obtained and planning permission granted, it was suggested that any resultant low cost/social housing might be allocated to local people. However, there were mixed feelings about how this would be assigned. The possibility of some residents down sizing was also mooted. The majority of Members present did not think that a residents' survey was necessary. It was proposed that the issue be discussed again at the next meeting.

69. CONSULTATIONS

(a) **Cambridgeshire County Council – Draft Rights of Way Improvement Plan**

The Clerk gave a brief outline of the contents of the above Plan and Councillor Saw mentioned that a quite a few of the pathways in the area had in fact disappeared. It was agreed that some routes had consequently been re-instated whilst others had been redirected.

(b) **Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Clinical Commissioning Group – Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services**

The Chairman informed Councillors that a twelve-week consultation period had now began on the provision of non-emergency patient transport services within Cambridgeshire and Peterborough. Without knowledge or experience of the current services it would prove difficult to provide appropriate feedback. It was therefore, decided that the document be circulated to residents via 'The Grapevine' and a notice placed on the website. The following Councillors offered to attend public meetings being held on:-

Councillor A Marnes - 21 September 2015
Councillor Mrs S Penton - 12 October 2015

70. COMPLAINTS

(a) **Noise**

Following receipt of two separate complaints in respect of unacceptable language/excessive noise emanating from a particular residence in the village, advice was awaited from Environmental Health Officers at Huntingdonshire District Council.

(b) **Speeding Farm Vehicles**

An unsigned letter had been received regarding farm vehicles travelling at speed down Lees Lane. It was hoped that dangerous driving through the village would be discouraged once the CCTV cameras were operational. It was suggested that witnesses should report such incidents directly to the Police.

71. MISCELLANEOUS CORRESPONDENCE AND E-MAILS

A list of correspondence received by the Parish Council as at 28 August 2015 had been previously circulated. Most of this had been dealt with during the course of the meeting but particular attention was drawn to the first Parish e-bulletin received from Cambridgeshire County Council, which it was agreed should be circulated via 'The Grapevine'.

Councillor Marnes alerted Members to the fact that new legislation had recently come in force regarding both visual and audio recording of public meetings. It was recommended that a related briefing note currently published on the District Council's 'Meetings' webpage could be amended and placed on the Parish Council's own website.

72. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

(a) **Ditch in Rectory Lane**

Councillors were informed that the ditch in Rectory Lane needed clearing in order to avoid any flooding occurring. It was thought that respective landowners along with both County and Parish Councils were responsible for arranging/undertaking such work which was last undertaken approximately five years ago.

(b) **Insurance Matter**

Councillor Marnes reminded Members that if permission was to be granted for the temporary private use of the play area by local residents, they should be mindful of the terms and conditions of the Parish Council's insurance policy ie documented prior written agreement must be obtained from all Councillors together with proof of appropriate insurance provided by the 'Hirer'.

(c) Councillor Marnes questioned the Chairman regarding wording of a recent email that was circulated between Councillors only. Councillor Marnes had given no prior notice that he would be bringing this up for discussion at the meeting. Councillor Mrs Penton, therefore, was at a disadvantage without a copy of the email for reference and was unable to reply.

73. DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

Wednesday, 7 October 2015 at 7.30 pm.

The meeting closed at 10.15 pm

Mrs S Penton
Chairman

Signed by the Chairman:

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