

## **STEEPLE MORDEN PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held at St Peter and St Paul Church on Monday 14<sup>th</sup> March 2022 at 7.00pm**

**Present:** Councillors: J Clayton (Chairman), K Austin, S Wheatley, M Bird, N Badger, S Traverse-Healy  
**County Cllr Kindersley (part), District Cllr Williams (part)**

In attendance: Mrs S Walmesley (Clerk) with four members of the public.

#### **1 Apologies for absence, declarations under the code of conduct and requests for dispensations**

Apologies were received from Cllr Belson, Cllr Carroll and Cllr Upchurch.  
 Cllr Bird declared a non pecuniary interest under Item 10.1.3 as a neighbour.

#### **2 County and District Councillors' reports**

##### **2.1 County Council**

Cllr Kindersley had circulated a report. There was a County Council meeting the following day, with five motions to discuss including traffic in Cambridge. He was interested to see what the latest suggestions were.

Cllr Kindersley reminded the meeting that he sat on the Planning Committee. He referred to the proposal for a car park at Hauxton where a decision on which had been deferred for further information.

The Parish Council had agreed to support a letter to Grant Shapps relating to the lack of an East West Rail business case. There had been 17 group meetings, he had attended three, where a number of questions had been asked with no satisfactory answers.

Work had started on the North Brook End buffer zones with a road closure scheduled for the 26<sup>th</sup> -30<sup>th</sup> March.

Correspondence had been received regarding proposals for a car park at Odsey so the project was still very much alive.

Cllr Austin asked if 20mph would be a possibility in the village. There was a '20s plenty' initiative which could be investigated. Cllr Kindersley confirmed that this was a possibility in some places but cautioned that they were not being enforced.

##### **2.2 District Council**

Cllr Williams reported that the green bins were now being emptied regularly again following the disruption in February due to vehicle issues and staff absences. Missed bins could once again be reported on the SCDC website.

She was pushing for a decision on the food caddy trial. The council was still not committing to a date when the decision would be made. Those on the trial seemed to be very happy with the caddy service.

It was noted that a planning appeal had recently been lost.

The 2019 audit was still outstanding. There was a meeting planned for the 29<sup>th</sup> March where it was very much hoped the accounts could be signed off before going into the next financial year.

A discussion took place on the outstanding audit and finances of South Cambridgeshire District Council where it was advised that there was no legal penalty for a late submission but there was a financial penalty. Cllr Williams was asked to feedback to the council the frustration felt by the Parish Councillors at the lack of progress and significant additional costs.

**HW**

The Chairman thanked the Councillors for their updates.

#### **3 Comments and observations from parishioners and members of the public**

##### **3.1 Cheyney Lodge Car Park Proposal**

As mentioned by Cllr Kindersley the project was still alive. An Odsey resident reported that he, and other residents, had a zoom meeting to discuss the proposal. They did not

feel that there was a problem with parking and would prefer to have parked cars along the road to slow the traffic. There were also concerns that a car park could be subject to unsocial behaviour. The Odsey residents would prefer a green amenity area. There were frequent ramblers visiting and this might be an attraction. The proposal also included a footpath to Ashwell but it was unclear who this would benefit. There was to be a further meeting on the 15<sup>th</sup> March between Odsey residents and the landowner.

The Chairman thanked the resident for the update adding that the Parish Council could not discuss the proposal until a concrete planning application was made. Cllr Traverse-Healy added that there could be highway implications too.

### 3.2 Buffer Zone Road Works

The work had started on the North Brook End part of the village. A resident had expressed concern to County Highways over where the speed limit ended. He was told to contact the Parish Council. Cllr Austin advised that the feasibility study prepared by the County Council had advised the preferred place for the buffer zone. It was suggested that a further LHI application could be made to extend this. Evidence would be needed so once the buffer zone was in place the MVAS would be positioned near the zone.

### 3.3 Grasscutting

Concern was expressed over the grasscutting the previous year where the contractor had cut when spring flowers were around. Cllr Badger offered to walk around to look at these areas so that he could liaise with the contractor. **-NB**

### 3.4 Update on Tree planting

The tree planting co-ordinator gave an update advising that she had applied for six free trees from SCDC on behalf of the Parish Council. These had been planted along the school car park with one near the play area. The trees had been mulched but with the recent strong winds this had blown away. All trees would be re-mulched. Most of the trees planted in 2021 appeared to still be alive.

There had been correspondence from SCDC with a quotation from a contractor for the purchase and planting of trees on Russell Close. The co-ordinator offered to plant the trees as a volunteer. The Chairman thanked the co-ordinator adding that there was money in the budget to purchase trees. The species needed to be confirmed as that was not on the contractors' quotation.

The co-ordinator offered four more trees for planting on the recreation area. Cllr Badger agreed to have a look around to see where they could go. **-NB**

The Chairman thanked the co-ordinator for all her work.

## 4 **To approve the minutes of**

### 4.1 The Parish Council Meeting held on the 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022

On a proposition by Cllr Bird, seconded by Cllr Traverse-Healy, the minutes as circulated were taken as read and then approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman following amendment of 9.1 final paragraph to read –

Cllr Carroll would endeavour to get the quotes from the contractors at the right price, for the relevant works, available for the March meeting.

### 4.2 The Parish Council Planning Meeting held on the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2022

On a proposition by Cllr Bird, seconded by Cllr Traverse-Healy, the minutes as circulated were taken as read and then approved as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

## 5 **Matters arising and carried forward from last meetings**

### 5.1 Gypsy, Roma and Traveller Policy update

There was no further update. As far as the Clerk was aware the finalisation of the Toolkit was still to take place.

### 5.2 Replacement of Allotment Boundary fence mesh

Following the last meeting it had been pointed out to the Parish Council that the contract between the Allotment Society and the Parish Council stated that the Parish Council was responsible for the gate and fencing.

The Clerk was asked to acknowledge this and ask the Allotment Society to arrange a quotation for the replacement fencing. **-Clerk**

### 5.3 Update on Churchyard Tree Work

The Chairman advised that the Church was arranging to have some side shoots removed and a Tree Safety Survey carried out.

## 6 Finances

### 6.1 To receive the financial statement and to approve the payment of bills

E-ON

Reading Room electricity March 2022 DD £ 39.00

PRO CLEANING

Disabled toilet clean Jan 22 £ 15.65

Feb 22 £ 11.74 £ 27.39

THE PRINTWORKS (ROYSTON) LTD

Newsletter March 2022 £ 55.00

MD LANDSCAPES

Verge cut Feb 2022 (inc £54.00VAT) £324.00

SLCC

Contribution toward membership 2022 £ 50.00

ST PETER AND ST PAUL

Use of the Church for meeting 10<sup>th</sup> January 2022 £ 20.00

**TO BE PAID BY 31/3/2022 -2021/22 FY**

MRS S WALMESLEY

Salary and expenses Jan –March 2022 £1406.13

TOTAL £1921.52

The Clerk advised that she had not yet received the invoice for the direct debit relating to the February 2022 streetlight power. However, it was agreed that this could be paid as long as it was in-line with previous invoices.

AGREED. Proposed Cllr Bird, Seconded Cllr Austin

### 6.2 Update on Invoices for Water/Electricity contributions

Cllr Bird had thoroughly investigated the charging of the utilities. He set out each utility in turn with a proposed approach to handle the costs involved.

#### 6.2.1 Electricity

The Pavilion/Reading Room is separately metered and the bills are paid by the PC. The clubs that use these facilities are then invoiced according to the formula:

30% Football Club

30% Magpies Junior Football Club

20% Cricket Club

20% Parish Council

#### 6.2.2 Water

The Village Hall and Bowls Club both have a sub-meter and so can determine what their water usage is. The Pavilion/ Reading Room do not have a sub-meter installed so any water not attributed to the Village Hall or Bowls Club is recovered as below –

5% Tennis Club

30% Football Club

30% Magpies Junior Football Club

30% Cricket Club

5% Parish Council

The sewerage charge is based on water consumption so will be charged across the users of the recreation ground for water.

The proposal was discussed and agreed. The Clerk was asked to send out to each of the clubs stating that unless they come back with an agreed alternate split this formula would be implemented in May 2022.

**-Clerk**

A discussion took place on the car park lights which were currently powered from the Village Hall supply with the Parish Council making an annual payment of £250. Cllr Bird suggested that the supply be moved to the Reading Room so the cost was included in the Parish Council bill. Councillors agreed that this could be investigated further.

**-MB**

### 6.3 Smarties Loan Repayment Proposal

The Pre-School Chairman, Vicky Hutter, was in attendance and invited to speak to Councillors.

Ms Hutter apologised for the delay in attending a meeting. She advised that it had been a challenging few years and even though the effects of Covid were settling it was still quite rocky. After looking at the finances the committee proposed that they repay £1000 every year for 6 years starting next financial year with the option of making overpayments if the charity was able to.

The Pre-school budget figures had been circulated to Councillors with the observation that they were struggling to meet their budget. Councillors were sympathetic to the financial position of the group and agreed that the repayments be frozen until 2025 when the situation would be looked at again. In the meantime Ms Hutter, or a colleague, was invited to attend the Annual Parish Meeting on the 9<sup>th</sup> May to give a report to residents.

## **7 Recreation Ground/Conservation Area**

### **7.1 Recreation Ground Checks**

There were no issues identified.

### **7.2 Steeple Morden Magpies request for Floodlights**

Cllr Badger and the Clerk confirmed that they had not received the requested information from the club. This item would be removed from the agenda.

### **7.3 Recreation Ground Booking System**

A discussion took place on how best to book the recreation ground for events. Cllr Bird advised that there was an events calendar on the website and recently he had been keeping this updated when notified of bookings. Councillors agreed that this was a satisfactory process and would continue with the Clerk being the main point of contact. The events calendar would be highlighted in the newsletter to make residents aware.

### **7.4 Proposal for EV Chargers**

The Chairman thanked Cllrs Bird and Austin for their investigations. A discussion paper had been circulated to Councillors who agreed that it was a good idea. The scheme would need to be run as a proper commercial operation with a view to providing the facility with the aim to recoup some of the capital costs. The estimated cost was £6-£8,000 with an expectation of match funding to reduce the cost to the Parish Council. The 'green' grants were expected to come back and both Cllr Kindersley and Cllr Williams would look out for their reappearance.

After further discussion it was agreed that further research would be carried out to enable more detailed proposals.

**-MB & KA**

## **8 Maintenance**

### **8.1 Footpaths /Footways**

#### **8.1.1 Craft Way Footway**

It was confirmed that the hedge had now been cut back.

### **8.2 Update On Litter Picking**

Cllr Belson had made a request to purchase some new litter pick rings. The rings cost £9.35 plus VAT each and she wanted to order 10. The expenditure was agreed.

Cllr Belson also advised via email that there had been 19 volunteers in Odsey the previous weekend, 8 of whom were new to the team.

### **8.3 Missing Repeater Signs**

The position of the missing signs had been reported to the Local Highway Officer.

### **8.4 Buffer Zone Road Works**

Work had started at one end of the village. This would be publicised on the websites so residents were aware. As advised under Item 3.2 the MVAS was going to monitor the traffic speed once the buffer zone was in place. It was agreed that Cllr Austin would also investigate the possibility of a 20mph speed limit in the village. He reported that the MVAS equipment had been in use for three years. He had recently analysed the results for Station Road and the percentage of offenders had not changed. There was still 50%-52% exceeding the speed limit.

**-KA**

### **8.5 Further Tree Planting in Village**

The Clerk to liaise with the SCDC officer over the species of trees preferred for planting at Russell Close.

**-Clerk**

## 8.6 Grasscutting

Cllr Badger had been speaking with the grasscutting contractor who, due to the massive change recently announced regarding agricultural vehicles no longer being able to run on much discounted red diesel, he would need to increase his prices as many other contractors were doing too.

Councillors agreed that he had no choice and agreed the increase. Clerk to advise the contractor. **-Clerk**

## 9 **Parish Council Projects 2021/22**

### 9.1 Update on Quotations for Car Park Resurfacing

Cllr Carroll was not in attendance.

### 9.2 Update on Redecoration of Reading Room Quotations

Cllr Carroll was not in attendance.

#### 9.2.1 Meeting with Village Sports Clubs -22nd March 2022

The Clerk had received feedback from the Tennis and Cricket Clubs. The Bowls Club had advised that, as they were self sufficient, they did not want to attend. The Football Club and Magpies had not yet responded. She would send a reminder to these clubs. **-Clerk**

## 10 **Planning/Tree work Applications**

### 10.1 To consider Planning Applications

#### 10.1.1 Planning Ref 22/00128/HFUL

26 North Brook End –Installation of solar panels to the roof of existing car port

**Recommendation -Support**

#### 10.1.2 Planning Ref 22/00623/HFUL

50 The Green –Single storey rear extension

**Recommendation -Support**

#### 10.1.3 Planning Ref 22/00535/S73

16 Station Road –S73 variation of condition 2 (Approved Plans) of planning permission 21/00251/HFUL –Single storey garage extension, conversion of dormer roof to full gable to allow inclusion of Juliette balcony and masonry extension to create detail around gable. Single storey porch extension. Front elevation amended to Render and small amount of boarding. Adding of 0.6m Trellis to side boundary upon existing 1.8m fence. Minor changes to the planned work including 1. To front porch remove tiles to roof area and replace with Millboard cladding –Limed Oak. 2, To the front gable elevation inset area, remove render and replace with Millboard cladding –Limed Oak. 3. To the new gable roof add 2no Velux roof windows, 1no to both the south and north elevations and 4. To the north elevation ground floor, move small window to the other side of the new side entrance door to the boot room.

**Recommendation –Support with the proviso that there were no concerns raised by neighbours relating to overlooking**

## 11 **Cheyney Lodge Car Park Proposal**

As stated under Item 3.1 the Clerk would reply to the Landowner advising that the Parish Council was aware of the discussions with Odsey residents, and would look forward to discussions once a formal application was received. The Odsey residents were encouraged to continue the dialogue with the local land owner to arrive at a scheme that all could support.

## 12 **Annual Parish Meeting 2022**

It was agreed that the Annual Parish Meeting would be held on the same evening as the AGM (May 9th), starting at 7.30pm in the Pavilion. Additional agenda items to include the

proposal for EV chargers and an update on traffic calming in the village. **-Clerk**

## 13 **To consider correspondence received including;**

### 13.1 Cambridge Approaches –Letter re EastWestRail Central Section (EWR CS)- Bedford to Cambridge Business Case

This was discussed under the County Councillor report. Cllr Kindersley had asked the Parish Council to consider supporting a letter from Cambridge Approaches to the

Secretary of State for Transport asking for the publication of a positive business case for the Bedford to Cambridge section of the railway or cancellation of the project. Councillors had agreed to add Steeple Morden Parish Council to the letter.

13.2 East Anglian Air Ambulance –Request to locate a clothes bank in the Recreation Ground car park

It was noted that Smarties Pre-School used to have a clothes bank there but did not always monitor it. Councillors agreed that permission be granted providing the bank was regularly emptied. **-Clerk**

13.3 Application by Bowls Club for a Community Chest Grant

As part of the application process the Parish Council had been asked if they supported the application. This was agreed by Councillors and the Clerk had confirmed.

13.4 Parish Council Elections 5th May 2022

Details of the election process had been distributed to Councillors. The Notice would be posted on the website and notice board on the 28<sup>th</sup> March 2022 when nomination forms would be invited by SCDC until the 5<sup>th</sup> April.

A discussion took place on other ways the election could be publicised and it was agreed that the newsletter email list would be used to circulate a newsletter bulletin encouraging people to apply. – MB

**14 Councillors' items for information and requiring the urgent attention of the Clerk**

14.1 Incident on Recreation Ground

There had been an incident where a vehicle had smashed into the car park barrier destroying a post and part of the pole. The driver of the vehicle had not come forward. Cllrs Bird and Austin had studied the cctv, in compliance with the CCTV Policy, and obtained some photographs of vehicles leaving the recreation ground at the time the incident had taken place. None of the vehicles were recognised by Councillors.

The Clerk was asked to report the incident to the police and forward the photographs to assist them with their investigation. It was noted that the Parish Council insurance schedule did not include cover for gates and fencing. **-Clerk**

14.2 County Broadband

Cllr Bird reported that a meeting had been held with County Broadband representatives adding that he had agreed to receive concerns by email and then pass these on to CBB in a coordinated way. This was being conveyed by website and facebook. So far, just one concern had been so raised. The Chairman stated that the original proposal from the company promised free broadband to 2 community groups which were agreed as the Primary School and Village Hall. The Church had also applied but was refused. The Chairman was aware that the school did not want to take up the offer and suggested that the Church take its place. Cllr Bird agreed to ask that question.

**-MB**

**15 Date of next meeting –Monday 11<sup>th</sup> April 2022**

There was no further business. The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.45pm

Chairman

Date