

## **STEEPLE MORDEN PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in the Cricket Pavilion on Monday 10<sup>th</sup> July 2023 at 7.00pm**

**Present:** Councillors: J Clayton (Chairman), N Badger, C Upchurch, O Parsons, N Sharkey  
County Cllr Kindersley (part)  
In attendance: Mrs S Walmesley (Clerk) with two members of the public.

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

Apologies were received from Cllr Traverse-Healy, Cllr Bird, Cllr Carroll and Cllr Austin. There were no interests declared.

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

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

Cllr Kindersley referred to reports in the press that there were proposals for Cambridge to become a new silicon valley with 200 -250,000 new homes. This was something that the local MP and authorities were unaware of. Cllr Kindersley stated that some local villages were already faced with the Thakeham proposal, which had gone very quiet, but the developer still continued to make political donations. Additional funding for the Bio Medical Campus and the East West Rail announcement all added to concerns. The County Council financial year was at an end where overspend was kept down. It had been difficult keeping the budget under control which meant a lot less with available money.

There was concern within the Cambridgeshire Fire Authority over Suffolk's request to withdraw from the current shared arrangement. A new system was about to be launched but as the future of Suffolk Fire Service was under question this may delay the implementation. It might also result on the closure of some Fire Stations.

An agreement had been reached to implement a system where Cambridgeshire residents would be able to continue to use Royston refuse centre. The finances relating to this were confidential.

A discussion then took place on potholes which the Chairman wished were repaired properly. Cllr Kindersley reminded the meeting that some were repaired on a temporary basis and if they were not satisfactory the contractor had to come back again and repair at their own cost.

Cllr Badger queried the Luton flight path and a public meeting arranged to discuss this. Cllr Kindersley stated that the revised routes benefited Steeple Morden as they were further north. There was now the post implementation consultation phase and also a planning application for a new terminal. Details of the public meeting, to be held on the 17<sup>th</sup> July, would be circulated by the Clerk.

Finally a discussion took place on the SCDC four day week. A Government Officer had asked that the District Council stop this and return to a five day week. Cllr Kindersley stated that it was up to the District Council what they did as they were the employer not the Government. He advised that the scheme had so far saved £333,000 with services either staying the same or improved. Some market research had been carried out with 96% of people stating that their query had been resolved on the first call.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Kindersley for his update.

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

Cllr Williams was not in attendance.

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

##### **3.1 Trees by the Tennis Courts**

The Tennis Club Chairman was in attendance. Correspondence relating to the trees had been circulated to Councillors prior to the meeting.

Concern had been raised over three Horse Chestnut trees growing in very close proximity to the third tennis court. These trees grow to around 40 metres in height and therefore it was recommended to plant at least 23-25 metres from any property. The

Tennis Club was concerned over player safety and potential damage to the courts from tree roots.

It was noted that two of the trees were small enough to be moved to another location. The larger tree would probably have to be permanently removed. Cllr Badger agreed to liaise with the Tennis Club in the Autumn as no action could be taken at the present time of year.

### 3.2 Sports Pavilion

The Chairman was asked for an update on the rebuild project. The Chairman stated that sadly there had been no further update on the plan by the sports clubs. The exterior of the Pavilion and Reading Room would therefore be painted as maintenance. Cllrs Badger and Bird were still in contact with the clubs to see how this could be progressed..

## 4 To approve the minutes of

### 4.1 The Parish Council Annual General Meeting held on the 24<sup>th</sup> May 2023

On a proposition by Cllr Badger, seconded by Cllr Parsons, the minutes as circulated were taken as read and then approved a true record and signed by the Chairman.

### 4.2 The Parish Council Planning Meeting held on the 20<sup>th</sup> June 2023

On a proposition by Cllr Upchurch, seconded by Cllr Badger, the minutes as circulated were taken as read and then approved a true record and signed by the Chairman.

## 5 Matters arising and carried forward from last meetings

### 5.1 Broadband Link to Church

CAPALC has sought legal advice and had stated that, as the system would be installed and maintained by the Parish Council for the benefit of the community, this would be allowed. The Church fabric would only be used to support the devices.

It was agreed that Cllr Bird follow up with the PCC to see how they want to proceed.

**-Cllr Bird**

### 5.2 Coronation Souvenir for Village Children

Cllr Badger advised that the souvenir mug had been distributed to 50 children in the village.

### 5.3 Agreement of position of Whitebeam trees on Cheyney Street

The CCC Local Highway Officer wanted to know where the replacement trees should go. The Tree planting working group co-ordinator had suggested places but there were issues with manhole covers. Councillors agreed that the proposed positioning should be revisited before a decision was made. Clerk to ask the co-ordinator to look again.

**-Clerk**

## 6 Finances

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

E-ON

Reading Room electricity July 23 DD £ 5.00

DRAX POWER

Street light electricity June 23 (inc £1.81 VAT) £ 37.92

PRO CLEANING

Disabled toilet clean May/June 23 2023 £35.89

THE PRINTWORKS(ROYSTON)LTD

Newsletters

£115.00

MD LANDSCAPES

Rec grasscutting April -June 23

£1425.00

CAPALC

Affiliation membership & DPO

£ 479.15

SALARIES and expenses April-June 23

£1137.03

HMRC

PAYE April -June 2023

£273.60

TOTAL

£3508.59

Agreed. PROPOSED Cllr Badger, SECONDED Cllr Sharkey

### 6.2 Internal Audit Report 2022/23

The written report was still to be received.

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

### **7.1 Recreation Ground Checks**

Cllr Badger reported that there had been some damage to a tree over the weekend. He was not sure of the cause but would make the tree safe.

**-Cllr Badger**

### **7.2 RoSPA Play Area Inspection 2023**

Cllr Badger had broken down the list of work needed and some had already been carried out by himself and Cllr Austin. He had obtained a quotation for labour £1200.00 for the remaining tasks and now needed to source the materials. As discussed previously the work needed to be done. Councillors agreed a budget of £3,000 which would include the labour costs.

**-Cllr Badger**

## **8 Village Grasscutting**

Cllr Badger advised that there was only one more verge cut scheduled for the year and asked if another should be agreed. It was noted that the grass growing was starting to slow down and Councillors agreed that one more cut in September should be enough.

A discussion then took place on 'No Mow May' which had been supported in the village. Cllr Badger pointed out that this left the grass very long which caused problems with both visibility and cutting in June. He had received a number of concerns and comments especially about the Cheyney Street bank. The Chairman stated that all around the village were meadows where the grass was left and proposed that from a safety point the 'No Mow May' initiative should not be supported in 2024. This was agreed by all Councillors.

A discussion then took place on the path along the Cheyney Street bank. A letter of complaint had been received from a resident stating that the path had become very narrow. This was not helped by overgrown hedges.

It was confirmed that the hedges were the responsibility of the residents who should keep them cut. Now that the bank had been cut the path, which was believed to be the responsibility of South Cambridgeshire District Council, should be a lot better. Cllr Badger agreed to look at the path, liaise with residents, and if needed would take some photographs to forward to the District Council.

**-Cllr Badger**

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

### **9.1 Car Park Resurfacing -Section 106 Funding**

Councillors agreed that the Section 106 money held be the Parish Council for Community Open Space be allocated towards the cost of the resurfacing.

### **9.2 Pavilion/Reading Room Decoration**

Cllr Caroll was seeking quotations. The contractor he had lined up for the work was no longer available.

**-Cllr Carroll**

## **10 Steeple Morden Tennis Club**

### **10.1 Concern over Horse Chestnut Trees by courts**

This was discussed with the Tennis Club Chairman under Item 3.1.

### **10.2 Proposal for Patio Area by the courts**

The Parish Council was asked permission to install a hardstanding area for a bench. It was difficult cutting the grass around a bench. Councillors agreed that, as the Tennis Club was going to fund the area, they could go ahead.

## **11 Planning/Tree work Applications**

### **11.1 Planning Applications**

#### **11.1.1 Planning Ref 23/02266/HFUL**

16 Hay Street -New window and filling in of an existing door to side

**-Recommendation Support**

#### **11.2 SCDC Recording of Planning Representations**

Following the last meeting, as requested, the Clerk had investigated why the comments relating to planning applications were not recorded. Unfortunately the old email address, which was used when registering, was where any acknowledgement would have been sent. As this was no longer accessible the Clerk was unable to confirm the representations had been made. She had arranged to change the email address.

**12 To consider correspondence received including;****12.1 Tween Towns Woodland Extension**

A presentation was to be made by the Woodland Trust at the Guilden Morden Parish Council meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup> July. Steeple Morden Councillors were invited to attend.

**12.2 East Anglian Bluegrass Festival 2023**

Councillors had been advised that the organiser of the Bluegrass Festival had stepped down and was looking for a replacement. This was being advertised. It was noted that the recent event had been successful although there were some issues again with the bin emptying by South Cambridgeshire District Council.

**12.3 Gigiclear proposed rollout**

Further correspondence had been received asking for permission to access land on the recreation ground in order to reach the existing Openreach infrastructure. Following the last meeting Cllr Bird had arranged a call with Gigiclear on the 13<sup>th</sup> July so would ask for clarification on the request then.

**-Cllr Bird**

**13 Councillors' items for information and requiring the urgent attention of the Clerk****13.1 Refurbishment at Odsey Hotel/Restaurant**

Cllr Parsons advised that there had been a lot of rumours circulating about the works on the building. He had spoken to the owner who advised that they were intending to open again as a Hotel and Restaurant. It was acknowledged that it was up to the owner what work, and for what purpose, this was happening. The building was outside the village framework so did not fit the criteria for housing (except affordable).

**13.2 Black Lane Shrubbery**

Cllr Upchurch reported that the shrubbery either side of the footpath had been cut back and removed by residents who had carried out a good job.

**14 Date of next meeting –11<sup>th</sup> September 2023**

There was no further business. The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.55 pm

Chairman

Date