

## **STEEPLE MORDEN PARISH COUNCIL**

### **Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in the Cricket Pavilion on Monday 13<sup>th</sup> November 2023 at 7.00pm**

**Present:** Councillors: N Badger (Chairman), C Upchurch, O Parsons, K Austin, S Traverse-Healy, M Bird, A Gear  
In attendance: Mrs S Walmesley (Clerk) with one member of the public.

**In the absence of Cllr Clayton, the meeting was chaired by Cllr Badger.**

#### **1 Co-option of Councillor**

There had been one application for co-option from Angela Gear. On a proposal by Cllr Traverse-Healy, seconded by Cllr Parsons, Ms Gear was co-opted onto Steeple Morden Parish Council. She signed the Declaration of Acceptance of Office and joined the meeting.

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

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Clayton, Cllr Carroll and County Cllr Kindersley.

The Chairman declared a non-pecuniary interest under Item 12.1.3 as a neighbour.

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

Reports had been circulated. Neither the County or District Councillor were in attendance.

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

There were no comments made.

#### **5 To approve the minutes of**

##### **5.1 The Parish Council Meeting held on the 9<sup>th</sup> October 2023**

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

#### **6 Matters arising and carried forward from last meeting**

##### **6.1 Broadband Link to Church**

Cllr Bird gave an update advising that he had obtained quotations for the Church which had been forwarded to the PCC for approval. He reminded the meeting that the Parish Council had agreed to fund the installation but suggested that the full cost be funded. Cllr Traverse-Healy agreed reminding Councillors that in the past the Parish Council was able to contribute to the running of the Church but this was now not permitted. This link would be for the community and would belong to the Parish Council. The link was also dependent on the support of the Bowls Club.

After further discussion on a proposal by Cllr Traverse-Healy, seconded by Cllr Austin, it was agreed to fund the whole project. Cllr Bird would follow up with the PCC. **-MB**

##### **6.2 Agreement of position of Whitebeam trees on Cheyney Street**

The Chairman reported that he had discussed the tree position with the village tree co-ordinator and they had some good ideas. Contact was to be made with South Cambridgeshire District Council regarding site suitability. An updated map of the proposed tree locations was on the Parish Council website.

Cllr Upchurch reminded the meeting that the drains on Cheyney Street were often blocked with leaves. Obtaining advice on suitability it was hoped that only trees suitable for the site were agreed,

##### **6.3 CAPALC Review of Financial Regulations**

Proposals put forward by Cllr Bird had been submitted for consideration.

##### **6.4 Confirmation of Meeting with SCDC Chief Executive 8<sup>th</sup> January 2024**

It was agreed that the meeting would be held in the Pavilion starting at 7pm. Only residents would be encouraged to attend. The Chairman would advertise in December once Ms Watts had confirmed the timings.

## 6.5 Feedback on Cambridge Carbon Footprint Session

Cllr Parsons was unable to attend this session so advertised on the village Facebook page to see if any other community group leader was interested in attending. He would hopefully be available to attend the next session in the Spring.

## 7 **Finances**

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

DRAX POWER	
Street light electricity October 23 (inc £41.24 VAT)	£340.43
THE PRINTWORKS(ROYSTON)LTD	
Newsletters	£55.00
MD LANDSCAPES	
Grasscutting conservation area/hedge	£560.00
MR N BADGER	
Bags for recreation ground	£10.43
PENNON WATER SERVICES	
Water rate April -October 2023 Recreation Ground (inc £72.65VAT)	435.86
Water rate allotments	£135.44
	£571.30
TOTAL	£1973.02
Agreed. Proposed Cllr Upchurch, Seconded Cllr Bird	
Payments made between meetings as shown on the Finance Report –	
BCW Office Products (signs)	£118.32
Removal of dead tree	£150.00
Disabled toilet cleaning	£ 45.00

A discussion took place on the bank accounts especially the Community account where there was over £60,000 with no interest. A discussion took place on alternative bank accounts, that paid interest, which Cllr Gear offered to investigate with the help of Cllr Parsons.

**AG & OP**

In the meantime Councillors agreed the transfer of £20,000 to Cambridge and Counties account. As with the invoices the Clerk would set up the transfer for authorisation. **Clerk**

### 7.2 Internal Audit Report 2022/23

The report and invoice was still awaited. The Clerk confirmed that the external audit had been concluded in September 2023.

### 7.3 Renewal of Streetlight energy contract November 2023-September 2026

The contract with DRAX energy had come to an end on the 30<sup>th</sup> September. The Clerk had been in discussion with the Broker, Utility Aid, who was working to get the best deal for all Parish Councils needing new contracts. Utility Aid had come back with a quote for a contract until September 2026 which the Clerk had shared with Cllr Bird.

Cllr Bird advised that although there would be a substantial increase in the charge the quote was excessive. He had investigated and found that the quote was based on a unmetered supply certificate (UMS) by Power Networks before the change to LED lights. He was now in the process of trying to obtain an up-to-date certificate to use for quotes which should be a lot less. In the meantime, DRAX continued to supply the streetlight energy on their current tariff.

The Chairman and Clerk thanked Cllr Bird for his help with this. The Clerk advised that there were a lot of Parish Councils in the same situation and Utility Aid was the contact recommended by CAPALC.

**MB & Clerk**

## 8 **Recreation Ground/Conservation Area**

### 8.1 Recreation Ground Checks

The Primary school PTA had arranged successful fireworks display on the 4<sup>th</sup> November. The Clerk was asked to write to the PTA and congratulate them on a very safe event and thank their members for clearing up straight afterwards.

**-Clerk**

### 8.2 Update on Play area repairs

The Chairman advised that the repairs were about to be started.

### 8.2.1 Outdoor Gym Equipment (December 2023)

Cllr Upchurch was investigating options and would present these at the next meeting.

### 8.2.2 Basketball Net (December 2023)

The Chairman advised that he had arranged to meet with three company representatives for ideas. He would report back at the next meeting.

### 8.2.3 Monkey Challenge

Cllr Parsons reported that the application for funding from Awards for All (National Lottery) had been submitted by the deadline date of 15<sup>th</sup> November. It would take around 12 weeks before the Parish Council received an update.

## 9 **Village Grass cutting 2024-2026 (December 2023)**

The Clerk confirmed that she had sent out the specifications but was asked for up to date maps of the grass verges. These were being investigated and would be sent out to contractors so that they could quote before the deadline for submissions at the end of the month.

Councillors were reminded that Magpies had received funding from the FA for the maintenance of the pitches they used. These were not included in the specification.

## 10 **The Waggon and Horses -Asset of Community Value (Disposal of Asset)**

### 10.1 Confirmation of intention to Bid

Following the village meeting Cllr Clayton had asked the Clerk to register an intention to bid. This had been acknowledged. Cllr Gear advised that the person running the bid had stood down due to work commitments. He had contacted the Plunkitt Foundation to get advice on requirements for the bid and had now forwarded the information to Cllr Clayton. Councillors would find out from him the next steps. They were aware that the village had six months to arrange the bid which would need to be done by May 2024. **-Cllrs**

## 11 **Parish Council Projects 2023/24 (December 2023)**

### 11.1 Car Park Resurfacing -Section 106 Funding

Update on Quotations for work to be carried out in Spring 2024.

Cllr Bird had been made aware that the surface in the drop off car park area needed attention. Cllr Traverse-Healy reminded the meeting that this was the responsibility of the school. The land for the car park had been given to the County Council as part of the Safer Routes to School initiative. The Clerk was asked to investigate the paperwork for this agreement before an approach was made to the school. **-Clerk**

### 11.2 Pavilion/Reading Room Decoration

Update on Quotations would be made at the December Parish Council meeting. **-MC**

## 12 **Planning/Tree work Applications**

### 12.1 Planning Applications

#### 12.1.1 Planning Ref: 23/04049/LBC

16 Hay Street -Single storey rear extension and new rooflight to side elevation (Resubmission of 22/04347/LBC)

**Recommendation Support**

#### 12.1.2 Planning Ref :23/03855/HFUL

16 Bogs Gap Lane -Single storey rear extension

**Recommendation Support**

#### 12.1.3 Planning Ref: 23/03852/HFUL

64 Station Road -Flat roof dormer to rear and two individual small flat roof dormers to front

Cllr Traverse-Healy advised that there had been an objection raised on the planning portal as not being in keeping with the rural surrounds. He referred to planning policy H13 which referred to the scale and character of the proposal. This was an isolated building and the dormer windows would stand out. Councillors agreed a recommendation of 'no recommendation' with comment.

**Recommendation -No Recommendation**

**The Parish Council asks that the planning officer checks if the proposal complies with policy H13.**

**13 To consider correspondence received including;****13.1 CAPALC Funding of Warm Hubs**

As there were no SCDC grants available for Warm Hubs this year CAPALC had confirmed that Section 137 funding could be used to support a request. It was noted that in 2022 there was no application from the community.

**13.2 Gypsy and Traveller Accommodation Needs Assessment**

Details of the questionnaire had been distributed to Councillors who agreed the questions did not relate to Steeple Morden.

**13.3 LHI 2024/25 Applications invited -closing date 12<sup>th</sup> January 2023**

Details of the latest scheme had been circulated to Councillors. Cllr Parsons reminded the meeting of the need in Odsey for a reduction to the speed limit and other traffic calming measures. He agreed to look at the County Council guidance paperwork, and prepare an application, with the assistance of Cllr Austin. **-OP & KA**

**13.4 SCDC Six Free Trees -applications by 22<sup>nd</sup> December 2023**

Councillors agreed to apply for one potted tree this time. Clerk to register interest.- **Clerk**

**14 Councillors' items for information and requiring the urgent attention of the Clerk****14.1 Bowls Club Query**

Cllr Austin had been asked by a member of the club who owned the land. He had suggested that the Clerk be contacted.

**14.2 EV Chargers**

Cllr Bird advised that the energy supplier, Octopus, subsidised the EV charger rates at the recreation ground by paying the difference in KHW. He would prepare some wording for the Facebook page so that residents, if Octopus customers, could take the opportunity to save money. **-MB**

**14.3 Parking opposite Airfield**

The Chairman had received complaints about the surface of the area opposite the memorial. Cllr Traverse-Healy believed that this was SCDC land as they had arranged resurfacing when the Duke of Kent attended a service at the memorial. The issue to be reported to them. **-Clerk**

**15 Date of next meeting – 11<sup>th</sup> December 2023**

There was no further business. The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.21 pm

Chairman

Date