

STEEPLE MORDEN PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held in the Cricket Pavilion on Monday 11th March 2024 at 7.00pm

Present: Councillors: N Badger (Chairman), C Upchurch, M Carroll, K Austin, S Traverse-Healy, M Bird, A Gear, O Parsons
District Cllr Williams (part)
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 Apologies for absence, declarations under the code of conduct and requests for dispensations

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Clayton and County Cllr Kindersley. There were no interests declared.

2 County and District Councillors' reports

2.1 County Council

Cllr Kindersley had circulated a report.

2.1.1 Cllr Kindersley request for Hybrid meetings

A request was being made to attend Parish Council meetings via a remote link to save travelling time. Councillors questioned how this would work. Cllr Traverse-Healy reminded the meeting that legislation was clear that Parish Councillors must attend meetings in person but that did not apply to members of the public, which is the status of the District and County Councilors at Parish Council meetings, and officers. It was agreed that the request be discussed with Cllr Kindersley at the next meeting.

2.2 District Council

Cllr Williams advised that there was to be a SCDC Cabinet meeting the following day where the four day week was being discussed. She had been told that there would be a public consultation on the future of the initiative and a full report would be made at the July council meeting.

The SCDC Council Tax element was increasing from April and also social housing rents. Cllr Williams added that there was support out there for those residents in need of help.

There was a delay on the proposals for the Local Development Plan and there were two SCDC Planning Enforcement Officers off work.

A discussion took place on the recent budget with reference to the Development Corporation and water credits.

Cllr Bird referred to the new Parking Enforcement initiative and asked if there was any possibility of a visit to the village by the officers. Cllr Williams reminded the meeting that this was a County Council responsibility. She had been asked to submit any areas of concern and she had advised of the Ashwell and Morden station and the Primary school areas. A discussion then took place on parking on the verges in Odsey and around the school area. Cllr Williams was asked to remind the CCC officers of her submission.

The Chairman thanked Cllr Williams for her update.

3 Comments and observations from parishioners and members of the public

3.1 Newsletters

Councillors were told that there had been no feedback at all on the absence of printed copies of the newsletter. Cllr Bird advised that residents did respond to the notification regarding electronic copies asking to be included on the notification circulation.

4 To approve the minutes of

4.1 The Parish Council Meeting held on the 12th February 2024

On a proposition by Cllr Traverse-Healy, seconded by Cllr Gear, 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

Cllr Bird reported that the PCC had received further questions from the Diocese which had been answered with alternative antenna locations.

5.2 Update on the Waggon and Horses -ACV Bid

It was noted that the future of the Public House appeared to be positive.

5.3 Prosperity Fund Eligibility

Cllr Williams had confirmed that the fund was currently just applicable to charities and businesses. There had been no decision on Parish Council eligibility.

5.4 Hay Street Flooding

Following the last meeting the Clerk had responded to the resident as discussed. He had been told that the Parish Council had no power to enforce any action.

A discussion took place on the suggestion of a land drain from the fields. It was also noted that there appeared to be a culvert in the garden of a house in Hay Street which might be where the water was running from.

6 Finances

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

MR N BADGER

Reinb for turf protection mesh £ 66.30

MD LANDSCAPES

Repairs to play area £2366.00

MRS S WALMESLEY

Black ink cartridge for printer £ 16.01

SALARIES

Salary and expenses Jan-March 2024 £1303.99

HMRC

PAYE January -March 2024 £326.00

TOTAL

£4084.30

Agreed. Proposed Cllr Traverse-Healy, Seconded Cllr Parsons

6.2 Section 106 Expenditure

The Clerk had spoken to the SCDC Section 106 Officer, James Fisher, who had agreed that the water fountain, and replacement disabled toilet door could be paid for out of the earmarked S106 Outside Space money. Expenditure on replacement fencing and gates could also come from this allocation.

6.3 Appointment of Internal Auditor 2023/24

It was agreed that LGS Services be appointed to carry out the Internal Audit as in previous years. The Clerk to arrange the appointment. **-Clerk**

7 Recreation Ground/Conservation Area

7.1 Recreation Ground Checks

The Chairman advised that all was okay.

7.2 Update on Play area repairs

The repairs had been completed. It was noted that a brilliant job had been carried out. A new steel self-closing gate was to be installed the following week.

7.2.1 Monkey Challenge (successful application)

The application had been successful with funding for the equipment awarded. Cllr Parsons was congratulated on his success. The installation of the climbing wall would take place on the 25th April. The Chairman advised the location advising of the size being 2 metres x 10 metres double sided.

7.2.2 Repairs to Cricket Nets

The Cricket Club had advised that the repairs were in hand.

7.3 Car Park Floodlight Repair

Cllr Bird reported that the second floodlight had been replaced. The invoices from the repairs had not yet been received. He suggested that in the long term the Parish Council might want to replace the units with something more robust.

7.4 Disabled Toilet Access

This was discussed under Item 8.2.

8 Parish Council Projects 2023/24

8.1 Car Park Resurfacing -Section 106 Funding

8.1.1 Update on work schedule

The Chairman advised that the work was to take place the following week.

8.2 Pavilion/Reading Room Decoration

Since the last meeting an emergency inspection of the Reading Room had been carried out. The cost of £250 was authorised by the Chairman and Clerk. Cllr Bird advised that the main Reading Room structure remained basically sound. The flat roofed shower room extension roof was in urgent need of replacing and temporary fixes had been put in place while quotations were sought. The replacement roof was expected to cost in the region of £10,000.00 so competitive quotations would have to be obtained. The possibility of grants was also an option. The Football Club was aware of the issue so the Chairman would ask if they could provide any financial contribution to the costs. **-NB**
Cllr Bird added that there were also a number of other jobs, including the toilet area, needing attention.

A discussion took place on the disabled toilet door lock discussed at the last meeting. Cllr Bird advised that a RADA lock was not possible on the existing door so a replacement door, at a cost of around £500, would be needed. RADA keys were available to purchase so other users could still have access to the toilet. The decision on this would have to be delayed until the new roof was installed as it could result in a different shaped access.

8.2.1 Update on work schedule

Cllr Carroll had followed up the work with the contractor who advised that he could work on the front of the buildings in May and complete the back in August. Alternatively he could decorate the Pavilion in May and Reading Room in August. It was agreed that the Contractor be asked to work on the Pavilion in May and then assess the position regarding the Reading Room roofing work in August. Cllr Carroll to liaise. **-MC**

8.3 Odsey Traffic Island

The Clerk advised that the Local Highway Officer had confirmed that additional strips had been added to the bollards. Councillors agreed that the main issue was the lack of light. The Clerk was asked to go back to the officer with a request for a light on the bollard.

-Clerk

8.4 Additional Posts for MVAS

Cllr Austin had urged an update with the County Council which had been acknowledged.

8.5 20mph Application

Cllr Bird confirmed that the application had been submitted with the request for a significant area of the village to be covered by the speed limit. He had noted that the County Council preferred bigger rather than smaller schemes from previously agreed previous applications. Quite a few people had provided evidence to support the application including details of accidents and near misses, There had been no response from the Primary School or Governors.

9 Planning/Tree work Applications

9.1 Planning Applications

9.1.1 Planning Ref 24/00006/FUL (Amendment)

Land at North Brook End Stud -amended site location address to Megs Farm

9.2 Quarry Footpath Diversion

Following on from the conversation at the last Parish Council meeting Cllr Gear had inspected the proposals and compiled a list of observations which she had circulated to Councillors. She added that there had not yet been a submission of the proposal to the County Council.

Cllr Traverse Healy advised that there was a letter of agreement as to how the quarry would operate and agreed to find a copy. He reminded Councillors that there was a long process of procedure to divert a Right of Way and there would be an opportunity during the consultation phase to object. **-STH**

Following discussion it was agreed to respond to the letter from the landowners agent, addressed the Parish Council Chairman, pointing out the areas of concern. Cllr Gear agreed to provide the information for the Clerk to send. The County Council Rights of Way Officer would also be copied in on the response. **-AG & Clerk**

- 9.3 Response from SCDC regarding question on budget for Planning Appeals
The Clerk had received a reply from the SCDC Planning Director which had been forwarded to Cllr Traverse-Healy.

10 To consider correspondence received including;

- 10.1 D Day Flag
CAPALC had advised that a souvenir flag was being produced for the D Day anniversary. The flag, if purchased, should be flown from 9am on the 6th June for one week. The cost of a standard flag would be £28.80.
Councillors were aware that a Union Flag was owned by the Parish Council and agreed that this flag could be flown on the 6th June. Cllr Austin agreed to arrange. **-KA**

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

- 11.1 Manhole Cover at entrance to Recreation Ground
Cllr Bird had reported the cover, which was sinking into the surface, to Anglian Water who had put the repair on a six hour call out.
- 11.2 Station Road Streetlight
Cllr Carroll advised that after reporting the problem with the streetlight the trees had been cut back.
- 11.3 Recreation Ground Bin
It was advised that the Bowls Club had been putting cuttings from Leylandii trees in the eurobin outside the village hall filling it so there was no room for general rubbish. This had happened a few times and there was still a lot of clippings to dispose of. Councillor Badger to make contact with the persons using the industrial bin for the hedge trimmings. **-NB**
- 11.4 Queens Jubilee Award
Cllr Upchurch asked that this be an agenda item for the next Parish Council meeting.
- 11.5 Annual Parish Meeting 2024
Councillors confirmed that the Annual Parish Meeting would be held on the same evening as the AGM, Monday 13th May.

12 Date of next meeting – 8th April 2024

There was no further business. The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.18 pm

Chairman

Date