**MINUTES**

**SOUTH LEIGH AND HIGH COGGES PARISH COUNCIL MEETING**

30th November 2023

7.30 pm in the Village Hall

**Councillors Present**

Lysette Nicholls (Deputy Chair)(LN)

Rita Sawrey-Woodwards (R S-W)

David Auger (DA)

Dick Pears (DP)

MINUTES

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| 1 | Introduction to the conduct of meeting.  Apologies from Cllrs Nicky Brooks and Peter Grant. Subsequent apology from Cllr Levy. No apology or attendance by Cllrs Rylett or Goodwin |
| 2 | Declarations of Interest – No declarations of interest |
| 3 | To approve the minutes of the previous meeting as being a true record of the proceedings – a copy having been circulated in advance to the Councillors – Minutes circulated were proposed seconded and it was carried unanimously that they should be adopted. |
| 4 | Opportunity for any parishioner to raise a matter of concern.  Information was requested about the vehicle abandoned by the garages in Lymbrook Close – Cottsway had been contacted by PC some months ago – they had served an enforcement notice and the vehicle was due to be removed on 1/12. The PC asked to be informed if it was.  The car parked in the road to Just Cartridges is not abandoned but has broken down and is awaiting repairs – if it remains there too long the PC will take action.  LN indicated that she could no longer produce the newsletter – her work commitments and position as a District and parish councillor meant that she was over stretched and she asked for volunteers. |
| 5 | Payments to approve – a list was circulated in advance of the meeting to councillors and the payments to be approved are Cottsway – payment re lease of playground £125, two payments to Ubico for grass cutting £168.54 and £75.24 and one payment to David Abbotts – grass cutting £250. All proposed and carried unanimously |
| 6 | Budget – Precept – it was proposed that there should be an increase in line with inflation and it was proposed that it should be 5%. Proposed, seconded and carried unanimously. DP commented on how much of the precept was taken up with grass cutting and that we were only able to balance the budget by not having to pay a clerk |
| 7 | Review of actions or discussions from last meeting - there was nothing that was not covered by items on this agenda that needed to be raised specifically |
| 8 | Anaerobic Digester decision – the rejection of the application was recorded and there would be articles in the newsletter that covered the issue fully. DP indicated that a recording of Acorn’s representations was being studied in the light of information from OCC and that counsel’s chambers had been identified should assistance be required in the future. |
| 9 | Update on Shores Green, A40 and Traffic calming in village – this was raised as part of item 4 in the earlier part of the meeting –  Shores Green – a villager had stridently suggested that the PC were insufficiently active about issues around the junction including the right turn off the A40 towards the village and were too focused on the AD, traffic calming or the Barnard Gate junction. The PC were clear that that was wholly inaccurate – they had had numerous meetings with OCC and a further one was due on 13th December. Engineers from OCC had had meetings in the village with the PC and had gone on walking inspections through the village with members of the PC.  The PC said they dealt with the issue of traffic both holistically as well as seizing on opportunities to reduce traffic. So there was no concentration on one issue within the whole issue at any particular time. For instance traffic calming had come about because OCC had failed adequately to reflect agreements/discussions that the PC had had with them. The PC challenged OCC at a committee meeting and as a result received a unilateral undertaking to put traffic calming in place as well as agreement to frequent meetings with OCC.  The 20 mph speed limit was as a result of a county wide initiative which with the assistance of Cllrs Nicholls and Levy was speedily implemented. The motion (see 12 below) and concentration recently on Barnard Gate was as the result of another recent serious accident and because of the willingness of a councillor to draft a motion and get the press involved.  One of the problems was that Shores Green and the dualling were once going to be carried out together but when that changed there was no longer initially a roundabout at Barnard Gate and there were different phases of building all of which would place different strains on the village.  As to Shores Green itself there had been discussions over signage, engineering the right turn from the west and other matters and those discussions were on going. |
| 10 | Update on conservation area application – after various to-ings and fro-ings and emails and telephone calls – WODC had offered three dates in January for a face to face meeting with the PC conservation subcommittee in order to discuss ways forward |
| 11 | WODC local plan consultation **–** the second consultation has been completed and they will have further consultations next year. Village Clusters and Dispersed Villages got the least amount of support. The railway feasibility study has been published and the cost is likely to cost £900 million plus compulsory land purchase. This was one of the options in the Local Plan Consultation (Number 8) whereby new houses should be built along main transport hubs and the railway is mentioned. |
| 12 | Opportunity for any County Councillor and / or District Councillor to update the Parish Council on any matter of relevance or concern – there was no report from our councillors (at that stage) but LN as a WODC councillor was able to update the PC on a number of issues. There was to be a meeting on 20th December with WODC councillors to discuss the preliminary view of the local plan consultation.  LN together with other councillors had ensured there should be a traffic safety audit in relation to the Barnard Gate junction and was intending that a motion should be put forward that developers who failed to develop land for which they had been granted planning permission should be fined.  There was £50,000 available for fruit trees – eg greengages – ie more unusual fruit rather than apples but it had to be on public land and Martin Spurrier indicated we had no land and there was discussion over whether the planning field fulfilled that criteria – DP thought not |
| 13 | Planning - South Leigh Footpath No.30 to be upgraded to bridleway which is from High Cogges Farm to the single track road between Stanton Harcourt and Cogges  No issues for the PC on that |
| 14 | Football pitch, grass and hedge – an attempt had been made to ensure that an area of the playing field had its grass picked up so games could be played on it and there was an intention that it should be roped off so that dogs would not foul it. The current contractors Ubico were being wound up by the Council so we would have to see what other organisations were being put in place. As was said earlier, grass cutting for the village took up a significant part of the budget. There was agreement that  there was an authorisation for one off leaf collection on village green in December for £75 |
| 15 | Salt boxes for winter – review of decision from October meeting – see also item 23 – DP outlined that Martin Spurrier and he thought there was no need to purchase 4 salt boxes. The PC agreed. The ones in position save for the one at Shuttles Cottage could be repaired to reduce water penetration but that if the salt was kept in its plastic storage bags with a tool to open them that would suffice. Rachel Murphy had been storing the salt and there was an amply sufficient supply in serviceable bags. DP through Dan Levy had been in contact with the Winter Service of OCC and they would replace the damaged bin near Shuttles Cottage. There had been a significant amount of saving to the parish budget |
| 16 | Village Security after recent thefts – LN indicated that there was an increase in thefts right through the district – as a first step the PC would contact Thames Valley Police for advice and try and liaise with the PCC |
| 17 | Village Records and Archives – storage and consolidation. DP outlined the first part of the process which was to ascertain the physical volume that there was. DP and Martin Spurrier had assessed the volume and briefly catalogued the material held by the Ashwells and the Brooks and would try and visit Phyllis Broome to assess the material she has. In the light of that and the need for the village hall to have additional storage there would be discussions about where and if the archival material can be stored - as well as providing additional storage for the village hall. |
| 18 | Good Neighbour Scheme – it was agreed that details of that would be given greater prominence in the village by email etc |
| 19 | Notice Board Update – the notice board for High Cogges needed further details from WODC but the position was now clarified and DP would talk in advance to Mark Walker |
| 20 | Railway line- the meeting of the village and Cllr Maynard about the rail line was postponed until the new year |
| 21 | Flooding at the pub, High Cogges and generally – DP had emailed Cllr Levy about the road and flooding by the pub. In relation to High Cogges it was intended that there should be a formal meeting with the landowners |
| 22 | Thames Water – discharge and sewage – DP had written to Thames water to ascertain the position of the phosphate stripping installation and in the light of the recent storm overflow discharges through most of November was seeking water monitors in a number of places in the village to ascertain where the problems of water ingress were at their worst. |
| 23 | Reminder to Village – re Emergency Plan – it was agreed that the plan would again be emailed out together with a link to the village website where it appears |
| 24 | Date of next meeting – 25th January 2024 |
| 25 | Points of information – there were no points of information not included above |

*SLHCPC*