

Swilland and Witnesham grouped Parish Council

Clerk: Mr Steven Barron

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Parish Council Meeting

Wednesday 19th July 2017 7:30 pm at Witnesham Village Hall

MINUTES

1. Chairman welcomed everyone to the meeting.
2. **The Code of Conduct. To receive Councillors Declarations of Interest:**
Mr Johnson is married to the Chair of the Witnesham Pre-School (Item 18)
3. **To receive apologies from Councillors not attending:**
Mrs Bailey, Mr Stanley and DC Cllr Robert Whiting.

Present:

Mr Everett, Mr Lightfoot, Mr Rush, Mrs Shaw, Mr Templeman, Mr Hindle, Mr Johnson, Dr Nicol, Mrs Pace and Mr Wilks.

In attendance:

SC Cllr Robin Vickery.

4. **Election for co-option candidate:**
None present. Clerk reported that the co-opt process had been queried by Electoral Services at SCDC. This Parish Council are compliant.
5. **To approve Minutes from the meeting held on 17th May 2017:** Prop Mr Lightfoot, Sec Mrs Shaw: Carried.
6. **County Councillor Report:**
Cllr Vickery reported that since his re-election he had been doing various compulsory training courses.
Cllr Vickery is an Observer for the New Wolsey Theatre in Ipswich which is part funded by SCC.
A new CEO is required at SCC as Deborah Cadman is moving on to the West Midlands. A replacement CEO is hoped for by September.
There was no update on extending 40 mph limit to Gibraltar Crossroads.
Cllr Vickery's Highways budget for 2017/2018 was in dispute and is currently reduced from £25k down to £10k.
There still appeared to be some outstanding repair requirements in Coopers Close to the recent tarmac works and the quality of the work already carried out was in question.
Cllr Vickery advised the Clerk of the contact details for Grit Bin applications within SCC, for which the Clerk gave thanks.
Chair advised Cllr Vickery of water leak/drain problem on Juby's Hill which he may be approached about. Clerk was dealing with this and had advised Anglian Water. The Clerk would keep Cllr Vickery in the loop.



7. District Councillor Report:

Cllr Whiting not present.

8. Footpaths

a) Cutting date of overgrown footpaths in Swilland

There had been two complaints from Swilland residents earlier in the year regarding the overgrown state of some footpaths in Swilland which had made dog walking very difficult.

Mr Hindle reported that footpath cutting priorities fell into two categories at SCC. Grade 1 paths were cut twice a year. Grade 2 paths were only cut if resources were available. Most of the Parish paths are grade 1.

On the late date of cutting issue, Mr Hindle had written to SCC Public Rights of Way to ask for first cut on grade 1 paths to be done before late June in our Parishes which might help.

There had been a report that RUPP35 (length of path across the meadows and up to Cockfield Hall) was blocked with overgrown vegetation. Mr Hindle had written to SCC asking for this to be cleared and ensure this was on the cutting cycle for Grade 1 paths.

Other issues included:

- The arm of the footpath sign close to the School was still awaiting a fix
- The missing sign by the Barley Mow had been reported
- There had been a repeat occurrence of SCC cutting of vegetation on a way through the woods instead of the public right of way on FP 16 Witnesham, behind Chapel Cottages. Mr Hindle explained that this had occurred before and SCC needed to clarify by way marking the correct public right of way.

9. Planning

Mr. Wilks reported that there had been planning meetings on 30th May and 4th July.

Highlights were the application for demolition and new dwelling at Broom Hill, Tuddenham Lane had been supported by the PC and permitted by SCDC, plus the application for car park changes and a new dwelling in the grounds of the Barley Mow, which was objected to by the PC, and has been subsequently withdrawn.

The Enforcement Case was due to commence this week at Homeland House Ashbocking Road Swilland.

Wades Lane site which was subject of previous enforcement was now cleared.

Planning Appeals:

5 Dwellings on America Hill opposite Burwash: Appeal dismissed
Hillbrow Farm, Tuddenham Lane: Appeal allowed

The Parish Council had been advised that there was also a strong possibility of a planning application appearing at some point in the future for a potential "Windfall site" at the Witnesham Saw Mills site. This was expected



to consist of new build dwellings on the site, but as yet no application has been submitted for formal consultation.

10. Police Report

SNT newsletters had been posted on the PC website. Chair stated that he would remind the SNT to provide more detail for our Parishes. **Action: Clerk to remind residents via email list, to remain vigilant and report any suspicious behaviour to the SNT.**

Mrs Shaw reported that there had been an instance of a false alarm set off at Witnesham School recently. This turned out to be a spurious fire alarm. **Clerk would seek detail and advise residents as necessary in case this should re-occur.**

11. Highways

a) The speed initiatives working group which had been set up at the previous PC meeting reported back -

An initiatives grid sheet of several ideas and cost estimates was shared with Council by Mr Johnson and Mr Everett. The working party had concluded that there were 9 missing repeaters through the villages but sadly SCC would not replace these. The suggestion was to focus on providing min 15 pairs of painted 30mph roundels on the road surface through Witnesham and Swilland which are common in other rural villages, combined with low cost signage such as Community Speed Watch signs and 30 mph wheelie bin stickers. It was estimated that this would cost between £5.5k and £6k. Other initiatives to follow could be the purchase of SIDs (Speed Indicator Devices) which would be dedicated to the Parish and located at random sites at various times. There are various options and unit costs are approx £3k plus each, but the posts required at multiple locations would be provided by SCC. Battery powered type was recommended along with a data recording facility.

Mr Wilks reminded Council that CIL funding was likely to appear soon which could help fund some of these initiatives.

In summary, Council felt that there were some good ideas and were in favour of supporting some of these initiatives.


Mr Rush proposed that "Council authorise the working party committee to proceed with obtaining costs for the 15 pairs of 30 mph roundels to be painted on the road network through Swilland and Witnesham along with a time scale for any future implementation", seconded Mr Wilks: Carried.

b) SCC Highways 30 mph sign survey -

Mr Johnson reported that due to a legislation change, remarkably, repeater signs were no longer maintained by SCC Highways and any missing they would not replace. Also they would only cut back obscuring vegetation on existing ones when the bird nesting season ends on 1st September.

c) Coopers Close drain issues -

The garden of 18 Coopers Close has previously been reported and witnessed by the Chairman as regularly flooding during heavy rain. The surface water drain running between several houses in Upper Street and the bungalows in Coopers Close appears to be blocked at some point which is causing the drain to overflow and flood No. 18 in particular. This is a



private drain and is subsequently the responsibility of all the various property owners along its route.

Chairman presented a large diagram for Council to indicate the drain route and explained that until the location of the blockage was found, it was difficult to pinpoint whose responsibility it was to resolve.

It was explained that SCC Highways had assisted the investigation initially, but as it was now proven that the blockage was on private land, they could not assist further.

Chairman had obtained a costing from a drainage company and asked the Parish Council to consider funding an investigation estimated at £960.00p to establish where the blockage was and which landowners could be responsible. Council commended Mr Rush for researching and spending so much time with this issue, but were not supportive of providing funds as it was felt it could set a precedent given the problem was on private land, and felt that it should be funded by seeking contributions from those affected or those whose properties drain into the network.

Other Highways issues:

SCC Highways were not prioritising some subsidence which had been reported near to Burwash, nor were they cutting back overhanging verges on minor roads. SC Cllr Vickery reported that two residents had complained to him about it. He was asked to take this issue back to SCC Highways.

B1077 diversion route was mentioned. Mr Hindle asked for the recent email response on the question of "Long Diversion Route" by SCC Highways or the Agency which deals with diversions, to be circulated and requested that future closures made sure that adequate signage to prevent Tuddenham Lane being used as a diversion were put in place at both ends.

12. SAVID (Safer Village Driving)

It was agreed that Council had no specific feedback on the SAVID grid, but did find this helpful when the working party investigated potential speeding initiatives. The next SAVID meeting was on 3rd August.

13. Playing Field Management Committee

Nothing to report.

14. Play Area Inspections

Clerk reported on behalf of Mr Stanley (not present) that the repair work on the Recreation Ground had been done and all looked good. Mrs Pace reported that there were no issues with the Play Area by the School.

15. Recreation Ground

Nothing additional to report.

16. VHMC

Mrs Shaw had nothing to report via VHMC. It was noted that two dangerous manhole covers which had been discovered were rapidly replaced recently and this was commended.



17. Tree Officer

Mr Templeman reported that the tree blocking the permissive path north of Wash Lane had been cleared. Mr Templeman had been informed by SCDG of specific tree types which were known to be present in the Saw Mill site.

18. Witnesham Pre-School SCC lease increase

Mr Johnson reported that further meetings had taken place between SCC and the Pre-School to discuss the setting of a high rent increase which was likely to be approx £2k per annum to include maintenance and insurance. Mr Johnson was pleased to advise that this would now not be levied until 2018/19 to give Pre-school time to consider funding support. Mr Johnson added that there was currently no request for any PC funding and he thanked Council for considering this item on the agenda.

Council decided that it would be necessary to consider the Pre-School in any future budget setting programme and asked to be kept informed.

19. New Grit Bin requirements -

Further to this issue being raised at the end of the last meeting, Clerk reported that he had finally managed to find the contacts in SCC and the process for Grit Bin provision. Two sites had been identified: Junction of Upper Street and High Road, plus junction of High Road Swilland and Wades Lane. Grit piles were present at these locations.

Clerk asked via the Chair, for council to approve expenditure for two green 90litre grit bins at £102.96p each plus VAT. This was approved.

20. Allotments -

a) Repairs to track leading to allotments in Hall Lane

Chair explained the issue of the rutted grit track which had been reported by a resident. One quote had been received and a second quote was pending.

21. Correspondence -

An email has been received from Rev Clare Sanders asking to address the Council on the subject of Parish Council contingency plans in the event of any future Senior Royal bereavement. **Chair asked that this be an agenda item for September PC meeting.**

A member of the public had emailed the Clerk asking about whether there was a Village Historian for Swilland. They stated that they would be willing to volunteer if this was vacant. Chair asked the Clerk to arrange contact details for the enquirer with another volunteer in Swilland who may be able to advise or assist.

22. Finance Update -

Clerk as RFO

a. Current Account: £18,270.01p

b. Ipswich Building Society £8,217.38p
(above balances as of 29th June 2017)

Current Financial Situation:

Clerk reported that internal audit was complete and external audit, with annual return, was expected soon. No issues currently.

There was a VAT reclaim pending for 2016/17 of approx £1.5k plus a small amount for 2017/18 which the Clerk would submit before September meeting.

23. To approve the following payments:

a) Administration May	£192.78
b) ICO annual renewal subscription	£35.00
c) Administration June	£154.34
d) Plants for hanging baskets	£39.94
e) Community Speed Watch subs 2017	£50.00
f) HMRC PAYE tax Q1	£125.40
g) Playing Field SCDC annual rates	£135.14
h) Funding towards Village Hall repairs	£500.00
i) Churchyard maintenance costs - (S137)	£465.00

24. Matters to be brought to the attention of the Parish Council -

Mr Wilks reported that Talitha Koum had recruited a manager and it was expected that the site would be functional by next month.

Mrs Bailey had advised the Clerk about nuisance fireworks late at night from Henley Manor wedding venue. **Chair asked that the Clerk email Henley Parish Council to offer our support if they felt would help.**

Mr Stanley had advised the Clerk that the success of the Village Show had been repeated this year.

Clerk advised Council of a faulty battery in the laptop PC and asked for approval to fix this by purchasing a replacement battery for approx £50.00p inc VAT. This was granted.

The pending phone boxes makeover was due by the end of July.

25. Review of Clerking costs and hours -

After discussion around Clerk's workload and the increased demands now within the Parish Clerk's role, it was proposed by Mr Rush, in line with this year's budget, to increase the weekly hours from five to six. Sec. Mr Lightfoot: Carried.

A proposal to back date this change to 1st April 2017 was put by Mrs Shaw, sec. Mr Lightfoot: Carried.

Meeting closed at 9:55 pm

