

SOUTH KYME PARISH COUNCIL
MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL
Held on 21st September 2023

Present: Cllr C Chapman (Chair)
Cllrs C Clayton P Goode T Kerr
D Langley J Nadin

Absent: Cllr C Midgley

In attendance: Nil

Also present: 4 members of the public

The Chair welcomed all present to the meeting and opened the public forum.

A local resident asked whether fitness sessions had been investigated for the benefit of the village. The Chair agreed to look into the viability of providing fitness sessions.

A member of the VTG asked whether the Council would write letters of thanks to the donors of fuel for the machinery the VTG use. The individual contributors were: The Casswell family, Leonard Morris, Simon Lamyman and Peter Bell. It was agreed that the Clerk would write letters of thanks.

A member of the VTG raised the issue that a previous councillor had written on the South Kyme Village and Wildlife Facebook social media page, that VTG volunteers were being paid for their services. This was untrue and asked the Council to publicly refute these claims to ensure that the public understood the truth. The Chair agreed to make a statement on the Council website to that effect.

A member of the public commented on the recent spate of vandalism. He was concerned that the perpetrators, if minors, would be persecuted by the council and asked that punishment for any transgressions, should be avoided.

Adrian Chapman, a local parishioner offered his services as a volunteer to the Council to act as their IT Manager and assist with the running of the website. The Chair thanked him for the kind offer and the Council agreed that this should be discussed at the next meeting.

The meeting commenced at 7.36 p.m.

116. **Apologies For Absence.**

The meeting was advised that apologies with valid reasons for absence had been received from Cllr C Midgley.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That apologies be noted with valid reasons for absence accepted from Cllr C Midgley.

117. **To Receive Declarations Of Interest Under The Localism Act 2011.**

There were no declarations of interest.

118. **To Approve As Correct Records The Minutes Of The Previous Council Meetings And To Authorise The Chair To Sign The Official Minutes.**

The minutes from the meetings held on 19th June 2023, 20th July 2023 and 17th August 2023 were approved as correct records of the previous meetings.

It was proposed, seconded and

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Resolved: That the Chair be authorised to sign the official minutes for these dates: 19th June 2023, 20th July 2023 and 17th August 2023 19th June 2023, 20th July 2023 and 17th August 2023.

119. **To Receive Brief Reports As Tabled:**

Cllr J Nadin gave a Community Speed Watch (CSW) and Lincolnshire Highways Meeting update.

The CSW team are struggling for volunteers at a time when the number of speeders is still increasing. Over a one-year period over 600,000 vehicles had passed the SID and around a third were over the 30-mph speed limit. This contradicted the recent Archer Survey and LRSP had agreed to redo the Survey in a more appropriate location. Cllr Nadin was to liaise with LRSP as to the detailed location. There was also to be a safety audit carried out by LRSP on 27th September 2023.

A meeting with Rowan Smith and Cllr Andrew Key from Highways determined some potential actions to reduce speeding in the village. The SID was to be re-positioned, 30 mph signs were to be painted on High Street and a pedestrian safety barrier was to be erected at the junction of the High Street and the footpath over new bridge. Highways also noted that overhanging branches and hedges that encroached the pavements would need to be dealt with.

Cllr C Clayton gave a Biodiversity Committee and Village Group update.

A meeting of the Village Biodiversity Group had taken place since the last Council meeting. Further research into the potential hover mower skirts had revealed that the one suggested would not fit the current equipment. Areas for biodiversity had been agreed and the area behind the white barriers in the centre of the village green was to be utilised to improve biodiversity. It was proposed that local farmers be approached to request the use of agricultural scarifier's to prepare the area for wildflower planting. It was also discussed that a local garden centre at Anwick could potentially provide native species plants that might be of interest to the Biodiversity Group.

The Village Biodiversity Action Plan was now well underway and some baselining had now been carried out. An endangered species had been identified in the Village and discussion around how to protect the Water Voles had ensued. It was proposed that to prevent damage to potential habitats that a 1m swath of the riverbank be left uncut to protect this species.

The meeting was closed to enable the public to comment at 1947.

There was a brief discussion on the protection of endangered species.

The meeting was re-opened at 1948.

Cllr J Nadin (Acting Clerk) gave an update on any correspondence sent and received.

Correspondence had been received from Asgaby and Howell PC asking whether the Council would like to join forces with regard to the proposed Beacon Fen Solar Park. It was agreed that this was a good idea and Cllr D Langley offered to be the liaison.

An email had been received from Sills and Betteridge, the solicitors dealing with the riverside ownership issue. Security details of the Chair and Clerk were required before proceeding. A letter had also been received requesting an Ordnance Survey form completion that had been requested earlier and had not been actioned.


The Clerk had sent a request to the Canoe Foundation requesting an extension to the grant contract deadline for the Canoe Portage as this was rapidly approaching.

Cllr T Kerr gave an update from the Staffing Committee.

The Staffing Committee (SC) had met on 1st September 2023 and had carried out a review of the end of the Clerk's tenure. The only outstanding action was to contact HMRC and request the production of a P45. The SC advised that a permanent replacement for the Clerk should be placed on hold until

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all aspects of the previous incumbent had been finally resolved and a clear picture was produced of the hours required to complete the Clerks role.

At this stage Cllr T Kerr offered his services as the RFO and stated that he believed Cllr J Nadin's tenure as Clerk should continue. The Chair thanked both councillors for their generous offers.

120. **To Discuss And Agree Actions Relating To The Employing/Replacing Of The Parish Clerk.**

The Council discussed the replacement of the Clerk and the RFO position. It was discussed that any future Clerk should live as local as possible and that this should be considered when drafting potential job descriptions.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That Cllr J Nadin continue in the role as acting Clerk and that the recruitment of a permanent Clerk be postponed.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That Cllr T Kerr should carry out the duties of RFO.

121. **To Discuss The Updating And Approving Of The Following PC Policies:**

The Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That the Anti-Fraud and Corruption Policy be accepted as written.

The IT Policy

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That the IT Policy be accepted as written.

The Grass Cutting Policy

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That the Grass Cutting Policy be renamed as The Grass Cutting Safety and Risk Assessment Policy.

The Volunteer Policy

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That the proposed changes to the Volunteer Policy be accepted as written.

122. **To Discuss And Agree Actions Relating To The Beacon Fen Solar Farm Planning Application And A Proposed Letter To Our Local MP.**

The Council discussed the joining of forces with Asgaby and Howell PC and determined that it was in the interest of the village to understand any actions that other councils may take.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That the Clerk would write to Asgaby and Howell Council stating that Cllr D Langley would be the liaison.

123. **To Discuss The Allocation Of Funding For:**

Portable Grass Cutting Signage

There was a requirement for Volunteers of the VTG to place safety signage on the local roads when carrying out their tasks. It was agreed that new portable light-weight signage should be purchased.

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It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That Cllr P Goode would ascertain some costs for the purchase of the signage.

An Armistice Wreath

Historically 3 wreaths had been purchased by Council for presentation on Armistice Day. It was agreed that this tradition be continued.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That a sum not exceeding £75 be allocated to the purchase of 3 wreaths.

The Installation of the Village Lifebelt

The new lifebelt location had previously been determined and there was a discussion about the fixing of the lifebelt by the riverside.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That a sum not to exceed £10 be allocated to the purchase of materials to fix the lifebelt in place and for Cllr P Goode to carry out the work.

Fencing Materials for the Village Green

The continuation of the white fencing at the village green was discussed.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That Cllr P Goode would ascertain some costs for the purchase of the materials required.

Maintenance Works to the Sleaford Navigation Memorial

Funding had not yet been allocated to the maintenance work required for the Sleaford Navigation Memorial.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That a sum not exceeding £75 be allocated for the purchase of paint.

The Repair of the Village Bus Shelter

The roof of the village bus shelter needed to be repaired as two ridge tiles were now missing. It was suggested that the responsibility for repair to this structure may lie with Highways and that this could be reported using Fix My Street.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That the Clerk would report the damage to the Bus Shelter on Fix My Street.

124. **To Discuss And Agree Actions Relating To The Purchase Of An Oak Tree To Commemorate The Platinum Jubilee Of Queen Elizabeth II.**

Although previously agreed that an oak tree would be purchased to commemorate the Platinum Jubilee of the late Queen Elizabeth II, Cllr T Kerr stated that he had an 8ft oak tree that he wished to donate to the village for this purpose. The Chair thanked him for the generous offer and stated that volunteers would be sought to assist with the moving of the tree.

125. **To Discuss And Agree Actions Relating To The Canoe Portage Initiative Installation.**

It was discussed that the canoe portage initiative was now running severely behind schedule and that costs were escalating. It was agreed that the previous Council had not researched or ascertained the cost of installation and that these costs could be significant. It was agreed that the issue would be discussed with the EA and Sleaford Navigation at their meeting on 28th September 2023.

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126. **To Discuss And Agree Actions Relating To The Proposed Footpath Maintenance Initiative.**

As Cllr C Midgley was not in attendance and he had been significantly involved in resolving this issue it was felt that this discussion should be postponed.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That this will be discussed at the next meeting.

127. **To Discuss And Agree Actions Relating To The Production Of A Riverside Ownership Map For Future Reference.**

As the Clerk was still to contact the solicitor and pass on security information and then determine further actions, it was proposed that this discussion should be postponed.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That this will be discussed at the next meeting.

128. **To Present The Budget Monitoring Report And Approve The Bank Reconciliation For The Current Financial Period.**

As access to the council bank system was yet to be resolved and the new acting RFO was yet to consider the Budget Monitoring report and Bank Reconciliations, it was proposed that this should be postponed.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That this will be discussed at the next meeting.

129. **To Authorise The Signing Of Accounts For Payment For The Current Financial Period.**

As access to the council bank system was yet to be resolved and the new acting RFO was yet to consider the Budget Monitoring report and Bank Reconciliations, it was proposed that this should be postponed.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That this will be discussed at the next meeting.

130. **To Receive Any Further Reports From Councillors.**

Cllr Nadin asked if the council were happy with the new format agendas and minutes. It was agreed that the new format was more appropriate.

131. **To Note Further Agenda Items And Arrangements For The Next Meeting (16 November 2023).**

The following items were requested to be added to the agenda for the next meeting, to discuss:

The position of IT Manager (volunteer).

The funding of light-weight grass cutting signs.

The funding of fencing materials for the village green.

The production of a riverside ownership map for future reference.

The recruitment process for a new Clerk.

The proposed footpath maintenance initiative.

The provision of a children's play area.

132. **To Resolve To Move Into Closed Session In Accordance With The Public Bodies (Admission To Meetings) Act 1960 Due To The Confidential Nature Of The Business To Be Discussed In Relation To The Following:**

To discuss and agree actions relating to the consequences for the individuals responsible for the damage to the village bus shelter.

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As Cllr C Midgley was not in attendance and he had been significantly involved in resolving this issue it was felt that this discussion should be postponed.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That this will be discussed at the next meeting.

To discuss the resignation of the Parish Clerk (Mr D Daly), his final financial payments, the recovery of council assets and the handover to the new acting Clerk.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That the meeting would move into closed session to discuss the resignation of the Parish Clerk.

The meeting moved into closed session at 8.57 p.m. and the Public were excluded from the remainder of the proceedings.

133. **To Discuss The Resignation Of The Parish Clerk (Mr D Daly), His Final Financial Payments, The Recovery Of Council Assets And The Handover To The New Acting Clerk.**

The resignation of the Parish Clerk (Mr D Daly), his final financial payments, and the recovery of council assets were discussed. The final employment scrutiny, reference time and payments already made would be carried by the Staffing Committee. The Clerks duties had now been formally handed over to Cllr J Nadin.

Actions by the previous Clerk had not been taken to resolve the change of individual access to the Council accounts. The Chair and RFO were to approach NatWest Bank and provide personal details and copies of Minutes to enable their addition and access to the Council bank accounts.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That the RFO would scrutinise the bank accounts to ensure that everything was in order.

It was proposed, seconded and

Resolved: That the Chair and RFO would liaise with NatWest for access to the accounts.

The meeting closed at 9.20 p.m.